

Pregnancy and childbirth

Birth is a life-changing experience, and each birth brings a new and different set of experiences and feelings. Pregnancy and birth is usually a safe and natural process, although complications can occur.

There are complications associated with pregnancy and childbirth. The most common complications of pregnancy include:

- Tubal or ectopic pregnancy (where the baby grows outside of the uterus)
- High blood pressure
- Complicated delivery
- Premature labor
- Depression
- Infection
- Diabetes
- Hemorrhaging (heavy bleeding)

You can reduce the risk for problems or complications in any pregnancy by:

- Getting early and regular prenatal care.
- Eating a well-balanced diet and getting regular exercise.
- Avoiding tobacco, alcohol or drugs that your doctor hasn't prescribed for you.

During labor, the uterus contracts and pushes to deliver the baby. The baby may be delivered through the woman's vagina or by a surgical procedure called cesarean section or c-section.

Vaginal Delivery

Possible side effects and risks:

- Injury to the bladder or rectum
- A hole (fistula) between the bladder and vagina or the rectum and vagina
- Hemorrhaging (heavy bleeding)
- Infertility (the inability to have a baby) due to infection or complications
- Emergency treatment for any of the above

problems, including the possible need to treat with an operation, medicine or blood transfusions

- Death (very rare — 1.7 in-hospital deaths occurring after delivery per 100,000 vaginal deliveries during 2000-2006^{xi})

Cesarean Birth

Possible side effects and risks:

- Injury to the bowel or bladder
- Infertility (the inability to have a baby) due to infection or complications
- Hemorrhaging (heavy bleeding)
- Injury to the tube (ureter) between the kidney and bladder
- A possible hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) due to complications or injuries
- Complications from anesthesia such as respiratory problems, headaches or drug reactions
- Emergency treatment for any of the above problems, including the possible need to treat with an operation, medicine or blood transfusions
- Death (very rare — 12.7 in-hospital maternal deaths per 100,000 cesarean deliveries occurring during 2000-2006 ^{xi})



Postpartum Symptoms

The feelings you experience after birth may be the most intense you have ever encountered: great surges of joy and happiness, feelings of contentment and fulfillment. It is not uncommon for women to also experience fears, worries or sadness. Depression can occur after the birth of a baby, and many new mothers experience various degrees of it. While depression can occur within days after delivery, it can also appear gradually, and sometimes it doesn't start until a year after your baby's birth.

In most cases, mothers have mild symptoms that may last only a few days. However, some mothers experience severe symptoms that can include exhaustion, feelings such as worthlessness or hopelessness, and memory loss.

In some circumstances, you may be diagnosed with postpartum depression (PPD). PPD can

occur up to 1 year after delivery but is typically apparent during pregnancy (50 percent of the time) and about 1–3 weeks after childbirth. PPD is characterized by intense feelings of sadness, anxiety or despair that prevents the new mother from being able function normally on a daily basis.

In rare circumstances you may have a fear of harming yourself or your baby. You should call your doctor right away and discuss these symptoms. If your doctor is not available, call 9-1-1. Doctors can give you professional help and support during this time.

Women with a history of mental health problems are more likely to have mental health problems following birth. These women may need additional support.

If you have questions or concerns, be sure to talk with your doctor or other health care provider.



After an abortion

Call the facility or doctor that performed the abortion, or go to the emergency room if:

- Heavy bleeding occurs (two or more thick pads per hour for two hours in a row) or if you are concerned about heavy bleeding.
- You have stomach pain or discomfort, or feel sick (such as feeling weak or having an upset stomach, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea), with or without fever, for more than 24 hours after taking misoprostol for a medical abortion.
- You have a fever (higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius).
- You have difficulty breathing or have shortness of breath.
- You have chest pain.

- Pain is severe or not controlled by pain medication.
- You are disoriented.

Your doctor will schedule one or more follow-up visits, usually beginning within two to three weeks after the procedure. Your doctor must schedule a follow-up visit within 14 days of a medical abortion. It is important that you keep all of your appointments.

You should also consider seeking counseling if you are experiencing depression, thoughts of suicide or other psychological distress following your abortion.

ⁱ Bellieni, C. V. (2012). Pain Assessment in Human Fetus and Infants. *The AAPS Journal*, 14(3), 456–461. <http://doi.org/10.1208/s12248-012-9354-5>. Last accessed 6/6/2016.

ⁱⁱ Fetal development citations

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ⁱⁱⁱ Pazol K, Creanga AA, Jamieson DJ; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2015). *Abortion Surveillance - United States, 2012*. *Maternal Mortality Weekly Review Surveillance Summaries*. 64(10):1–40. Available: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss6410a1.htm?s_cid=ss6410a_e. Last accessed 9/10/2016.

^{iv} Large-scale studies of public health records in Denmark and Finland, which provide state-funded abortion, have shown a higher risk of death.

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^v Breast cancer citations:

Huang, Y., Zhang, X., Li, W. et al. (2014). A meta-analysis of the association between induced abortion and breast cancer risk among Chinese females. *Cancer Causes Control*, 25: 227.

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vii Suction cutterage:

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viii Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG). The care of women requesting induced abortion. London (England): Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG); 2011 Nov. 130 p. (Evidence-based Clinical Guideline; no. 7). <http://www.rcog.org.uk/womens-health/clinical-guidance/care-women-requesting-induced-abortion>. Last accessed 6/6/2016.

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Texas Department of State Health Services

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To:	"Bowman, Matthew (HHS/OGC) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=4caeb9900d27435daf018df146c4f075-Bowman, Mat>"
Subject:	FW: Update on pregnant UAC? - Request for Additional Information
Date:	2017/10/31 22:40:44
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note

Privileged—legal advice

Matt, please advise as to legal issues:

Jessica,

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

From: White, Jonathan (ACF)
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2017 2:39 PM
To: Lloyd, Scott (ACF)
Subject: FW: Update on pregnant UAC? - Request for Additional Information

Scott,

FYSA, latest update on the currently pregnant UAC at IES LF facility.

From: Brooks, Teresa (ACF)
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2017 2:34 PM
To: Sualog, Jallyn (ACF); White, Jonathan (ACF)
Subject: Fwd: Update on pregnant UAC? - Request for Additional Information

Please see the information in the correspondence below per your request.

Thank you,

Teresa

From: "Jessica Martinez" <jessica.martinez@iestex.org>
Subject: RE: Update on pregnant UAC? - Request for Additional Information
Date: 31 October 2017 12:35
To: "Brooks, Teresa (ACF)" <Teresa.Brooks@ACF.hhs.gov>, "(b)(6)@iestex.org" <(b)(6)@iestex.org>
Cc: "(b)(6)@iestex.org", "(b)(6)@iestex.org" <(b)(6)@iestex.org>

Good Morning Teresa,

As discussed, I apologize for delay, I was at children's program earlier and had not seen your email request.

With regards to UAC voicing "TOP", her pregnancy has been confirmed by Dr. (b)(6) OB/GYN. UAC's initial OB/GYN appointment took place on 10/27, UAC verbally consented to entire medical exam, including sonogram and 1st trimester lab work. OB/GYN noted minor was approximately 9 weeks' gestation on 10/27/17. Following the completion of doctor's examination, UAC informed Dr. (b)(6) that she did not want a baby and openly informed Dr. (b)(6) she is seeking to terminate pregnancy. Dr. (b)(6) acknowledged UAC's statement and responded that she should discuss her options further with care provider. UAC responded to Dr. (b)(6) that care provider was aware of her wishes, UAC was in the presence of Medical Coordinator and Dr. (b)(6) stated to Medical Coordinator that his office could provide information regarding local "options counseling" and other resources, program Medical Coordinator informed Dr. (b)(6) that program would elevate minor's request to appropriate officials and seek further guidance before discussing minor's request. Dr. (b)(6) stated he understood and reiterated that should minor undergo procedure he would be prepared to conduct follow-up with her after procedure. At no point in time during initial OB appointment were any "options" discussed with UAC, care provider staff and Dr. (b)(6) did not issue information or resources to UAC, instead care provider and doctor listened attentively and informed her that her request would be noted. UAC's next OB/GYN appointment in 11/21/17 at 9:00 a.m.

UAC disclosed pregnancy to her mother on 10/26, however she has not disclosed her request for "TOP". In addition, sponsor is not aware of pregnancy or UAC's request for "TOP". At this time, minor has stated she is not willing to inform sponsor of pregnancy and we continue working with UAC with regards to sharing her request for "TOP" with her mother. UAC has requested to meet with ProBAR (legal service provider) follow up with legal service provider is pending.

Please be advised at this time care provider has received an incomplete FRA from sponsor (unverified brother in law). Care provider has received UAC's birth certificate, UAC's adult sister (sponsor's wife) birth certificate and UAC's mother's birth certificate. In addition, UAC's mother has provided a notarized letter from home country authorizing sponsor to take care and take custody of UAC. However, sponsor has yet to provide a copy of his birth certificate and a copy of marriage certificate (to prove formal relationship with UAC). As previously reported, sponsor resides and works in Wendell, Idaho, the nearest fingerprint site is an 8 hour drive, however sponsor stated he would make the necessary arrangements to travel to site. Sponsor has not returned Authorization for Relapse of Information forms therefore fingerprint appointment has not been scheduled. Please also note that minor's adult sister and 1-year-old nephew remain in DHS custody. According to sponsor he has not had communication with his wife (UAC's sister). Sponsor also has reported he resides in a home with other adult household members, his brother, his brother's wife and their children. At this time sponsor has not reported any criminal history with the exception of an immigration arrest. Sponsor disclosed that he and his son (4 years old at the time) were apprehended approximately 3 years ago upon entering the U.S. without proper documents or inspection. According to sponsor he is attending immigration proceedings and he is without legal status. Sponsor reported he intends to comply with all immigration hearings. Please also note that UAC has denied a history of abuse, mistreatment or neglect, there is no known history of trauma and UAC has described her relationship with her mother as "positive".

Please advise if further information is needed or if there any further questions or concerns, thank you.

Jessica Martinez, MA, LCCA

Program Director

IES Shelter Los Fresnos

International Educational Services, Inc.

P.O. Box 112

Los Fresnos, TX 78566

Phone: 956-233-5705 ext: 1410

Cell: 956-(b)(6)

Fax: 956-233-3435

Jessica.martinez@iestex.org



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From: Brooks, Teresa (ACF) [mailto:Teresa.Brooks@ACF.hhs.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2017 9:02 AM
To: Jessica Martinez <jessica.martinez@iestex.org>; (b)(6)@iestex.org
Cc: (b)(6)@iestex.org; (b)(6)@iestex.org
<(b)(6)@iestex.org>
Subject: FW: Update on pregnant UAC? - Request for Additional Information
Importance: High

Please see the information request below.

Please provide the information as requested as promptly as is possible.

Thank you!

Teresa

Teresa Brooks

Federal Field Specialist Supervisor, South Texas

HHS ACF ORR DUCO

202.631.3775

Teresa.Brooks@acf.hhs.gov

From: White, Jonathan (ACF)
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 5:07 PM
To: Brooks, Teresa (ACF); Sualog, Jallyn (ACF)
Subject: Update on pregnant UAC?
Importance: High

Teresa/Jallyn,

Would you please update me on the latest in reunification progress for the UAC at IES LF who is currently pregnant and expresses interest in TOP? Appreciate latest on OBGYN appointment outcomes, discussion with her mother, and especially on reunification. If you could provide by 10AM Central time Tuesday would be very helpful.

Jonathan

Jonathan White
Commander, US Public Health Service
Deputy Director for Children's Programs
Office of Refugee Resettlement

Administration for Children and Families
Jonathan.White@acf.hhs.gov
(202) 570-8916

Recipient:	"Bowman, Matthew (HHS/OGC) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=4caeb9900d27435daf018df146c4f075-Bowman, Mat>"
Sent Date:	2017/10/31 22:08:14
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Message Flags:	Unsent



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Carrie Gordon Earll
Vice President
Government and Public Policy

tel: 719-548-5819
fax: 719-531-3390

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To:	"White, Jonathan (ACF) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=e9b5fe526f1d4ba0a6cc8ddee8ec4d87-Jonathan Wh>"
CC:	"White, Laura (ACF) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=2e7ff3f1d0ba483990c0f80827410056-Gregg, Laur>"
Subject:	RE: Update on minor at SWK Campbell requesting TOP
Date:	2018/01/18 07:32:53
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note

Jonathan,

Thank you. Two things:

- 1) (b)(5)
- 2) Please have the program / federal staff evaluate whether it has been made clear to her that support is readily available if she chooses to parent the child, or if she decides to offer the baby for adoption. Sometimes adoption is an option that is not well-developed, even in some pregnancy resource settings. If the clinician feels that there has been adequate treatment of these options, no follow up is necessary on that front.
- 3) Please

From: White, Jonathan (ACF)
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 12:01 PM
To: Lloyd, Scott (ACF)
Cc: White, Laura (ACF)
Subject: Update on minor at SWK Campbell requesting TOP
Importance: High

Update on minor at SWK Campbell in Arizona who is requesting abortion to terminate pregnancy resulting from rape in home country:

- The minor is 16 years of age. She turned 16 on (b)(6) 17.

- The minor is pregnant as a result of rape in home country by a group of unknown men. She reports being approached by unknown men in country of origin, who covered her mouth with a piece of cloth, and then then lost consciousness. She woke up later in an unknown location with her clothes off. She was 15 years old at the time of the rape. She denies having had other sexual experiences.
- The minor was evaluated by OB/GYN services on January 10, 2018, without concerns.
- Gestational development: Based on ultrasound conducted on January 10, the minor was then 10 weeks 1 day. Based on this measurement, gestational age is today **11 weeks 1 day**.
- ORR has not received any report that there is a medically indicated necessity for abortion for the life of the minor.
- The next routine medical appointment is scheduled in two weeks.
- On January 11, the minor attended options counseling at Choices Pregnancy Center (CPC), a crisis pregnancy center from the HHS approved list. The minor was provided with information and reported that her questions were all answered. The minor was provided with “appropriate drawings to color and with Bible verses,” per the SIR.
- On January 16, a family session was conducted, disclosing to the minor’s parents in home country her pregnancy and her decision to pursue TOP. The minor’s clinician was involved. The minor requested that the notification not include the information that that the pregnancy was a result of rape.
- The minor spoke with a pastor from her faith tradition on January 15, 2018.
- On January 16, two family sessions were conducted, disclosing to the minor’s parents in home country her pregnancy and her decision to pursue TOP. The minor’s clinician was involved. A first family session was held with the minor, and the second session the minor asked not to participate. The minor requested that her parents not be informed that the pregnancy is a result of rape, but the family reported that their daughter may have been raped. The minor’s father advised that the parents “agreed to end the pregnancy” and expressed that “if minor is requesting to end the pregnancy they supported her.”
- The SIR addendum for the family notification explains: **“On 1/16/2018 at approximately 3:30 p.m., clinician (b)(6) completed a family session with minor and her father. Minor requested that clinician inform her parents she was pregnant and that she was requesting to end her pregnancy. Minor requested that**

clinician not disclose how minor became pregnant. Furthermore, clinician informed minor’s father that minor was pregnant and requesting

to end the pregnancy. Minor's father was notified that minor was taken to the doctor and it was confirmed she is approximately 10 weeks

pregnant. Minor's father appeared calm and asked clinician if minor could be reunified with his older daughter. Minor's father requested

time to speak to his wife before making a decision on minor's request to end her pregnancy. On 1/16/2018 at approximately 5 p.m., clinician

(b)(6) completed a family session with minor's parents. Minor requested not to be present for the second family session.

Clinician spoke to minor's father who conveyed he had spoken to his wife and decided that they agreed to end the pregnancy. Clinician asked

minor's father to clarify what he agreed to. Minor's father stated he and his wife spoke and consider that minor may have been raped on her

way to school. Minor's father shared that in their home town if a woman is raped, the expectation is that she will marry the man that raped

her. Minor's father stated that he and his wife are not sure that the pregnancy was a result of minor's choices or of a rape. Minor stated that

if minor is requesting to end the pregnancy they supported her. Minor's father also shared that minor is young and still a child herself to be raising a child of her own. Minor's father appeared calm and was respectful as he shared the aforementioned."

- At this time the minor continues her request for TOP "due to the pregnancy being a result of sexual abuse."
- All steps outlined by the ORR Director have been completed. Parental notification has been conducted, in which the family expressed support for their daughter to receive the abortion. The minor has received options counseling from an approved provider. The minor has received spiritual counseling from a pastor of her faith group (evangelical Christian).
- Please advise next steps.

Jonathan

Jonathan D. White
Commander, U.S. Public Health Service
Deputy Director for Children's Programs
Office of Refugee Resettlement
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 C Street SW
(202) 690-6984
jonathan.white@acf.hhs.gov

Recipient:	"White, Jonathan (ACF) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=e9b5fe526f1d4ba0a6cc8ddee8ec4d87-Jonathan Wh>"; "White, Laura (ACF) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=2e7ff3f1d0ba483990c0f80827410056-Gregg, Laur>"
Sent Date:	2018/01/18 07:29:32
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To:	"White, Jonathan (ACF) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=e9b5fe526f1d4ba0a6cc8ddee8ec4d87-Jonathan Wh>"
CC:	"White, Laura (ACF) </o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=2e7ff3f1d0ba483990c0f80827410056-Gregg, Laur>"
Subject:	RE: Update on minor at SWK Campbell requesting TOP
Date:	2018/01/18 16:05:29
Priority:	Normal
Type:	Note

Jonathan,

- 1) (b)(5)
- 2) Please have the program / federal staff evaluate whether the following information has been made adequately clear to the youth, and if not, ask that they offer her the option of receiving more information on these subjects, if they feel they can do so consistent with her mental well being:
 - a. that support is readily available if she chooses to parent the child;
 - b. that support is readily available if she decides to offer the baby for adoption, and that she has been given the opportunity to discuss adoption in depth if she chooses;
 - c. that in some cases, women or minors who have had abortions have expressed regret from having done so, even when pregnancy is the result of sexual assault, and that if she chooses the program can provide for her some written examples of the personal testimony of such women.

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Cc: White, Laura (ACF)
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minor's father to clarify what he agreed to. Minor's father stated he and his wife spoke and consider that minor may have been raped on her

way to school. Minor's father shared that in their home town if a woman is raped, the expectation is that she will marry the man that raped

her. Minor's father stated that he and his wife are not sure that the pregnancy was a result of minor's choices or of a rape. Minor stated that

if minor is requesting to end the pregnancy they supported her. Minor's father also shared that minor is young and still a child herself to be raising a child of her own. Minor's father appeared calm and was respectful as he shared the aforementioned."

- At this time the minor continues her request for TOP "due to the pregnancy being a result of sexual abuse."
- All steps outlined by the ORR Director have been completed. Parental notification has been conducted, in which the family expressed support for their daughter to receive the abortion. The minor has received options counseling from an approved provider. The minor has received spiritual counseling from a pastor of her faith group (evangelical Christian).
- Please advise next steps.

Jonathan

Jonathan D. White

Commander, U.S. Public Health Service

Deputy Director for Children's Programs

Office of Refugee Resettlement

Administration for Children and Families

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

330 C Street SW

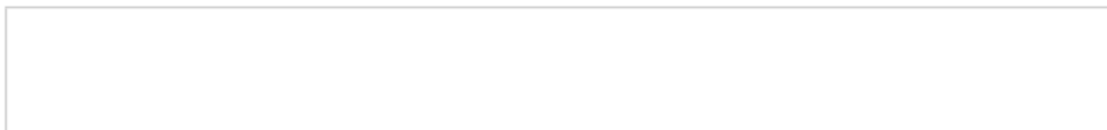
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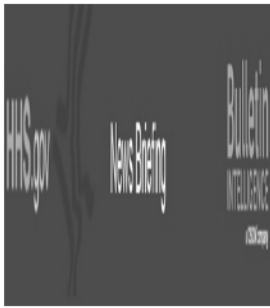
jonathan.white@acf.hhs.gov

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HHS News Briefing

TO: THE SECRETARY AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: MONDAY, JULY 2, 2018 7:30 AM EDT

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Leading the News

Hundreds Of Thousands Protest Administration's Immigration Policy, Separation Of Families.

ABC World News Tonight 📺 Video (6/30, lead story, 2:50, Llamas, 4.58M) reported in its lead story that "we begin tonight with the massive nationwide protests against the President's immigration policy. Tens of thousands of protesters in more than 700 demonstrations, like this one in Chicago, in cities and towns from coast to coast, in every state, urging President Trump to reunite the families separated at the southern border. Part of the fallout from his zero-tolerance immigration policy."

In its lead story, the CBS Weekend News 📺 Video (6/30, lead story, 2:20, Ninan, 2.62M) reported, "Americans across the country are making their voices heard this Fourth of July weekend at loud rallies

from coast to coast. They're demanding that thousands of immigrant children be set free and reunited with their parents. And President Trump may have heard. He tweeted this afternoon that people coming to this country illegally must be escorted out." CBS correspondent Kenneth Craig added, "New York's protest brought an estimated 15,000 to the streets of lower Manhattan over the Trump Administration's zero-tolerance policy on illegal border crossings." Craig also mentioned that HHS said it has custody of more than 2,000 immigrant children separated from their parents.

NBC Nightly News 📺 Video (6/30, lead story, 2:35, Diaz-Balart, 12.78M) reported in its lead story, "Hundreds of thousands of people in communities across the country mobilized today for [im]migrant families, protesting President Trump's policy that separated children from their loved ones. Tonight, more than 2,000 of those children remain in detention centers, in a country that's not their own, far from their parents. The White House mostly silent on the issue today."

The Washington Post (6/30, Lang, Zauzmer, Natanson, 15.68M) reported that on Saturday, some 750 "'Families Belong Together' rallies were planned throughout the country in every state – from big cities such as Boston, Chicago and New York to tiny ones such as Antler, N.D., which has a population of 27." Organizers said about 50,000 people gathered in Washington, DC, although the Post indicated the total number may have been somewhat less than that. All these protesters had one message: "End President Trump's 'zero tolerance' immigration policy, which has split children from their parents and detained families crossing the southern U.S. border." The article added that whenever "the government, Border Patrol agents or the Trump administration" was mentioned, "the crowd erupted into chants of 'shame, shame, shame.'" And "as they passed the Trump International Hotel, protesters booed and chanted 'vote him out.'"

The New York Times (6/30, Yoon-Hendricks, Greenberg, 19.33M) reported that galvanized “by what they view as the cruel treatment of [im]migrants seeking refuge in the United States from violence in their home countries, the crowds turned out Saturday bearing homemade signs that read ‘Abolish ICE’ – the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency – and ‘Zero tolerance for family separation.’” The article said that although “Washington was the political epicenter of the protests, similar scenes unfolded in cities around the country, including large, border cities like El Paso, state capitals like Salt Lake City and Atlanta, and smaller, interior towns like Redding, Calif.” The piece added that for the most part, the protests were peaceful, with only a few arrests.

USA Today (6/30, Hayes, 11.4M) reported on the rallies in all 50 states, but asked, “now what? Will the issue and the outrage fade into the background or help lead to a pivotal moment in the debate over immigration in the U.S.?” A spokesman for MoveOn.org, “one of the organizations behind the nationwide rallies,” said, “I’ve never seen so many people that so deeply care about immigration. This is unlike anything I’ve seen. It’s just a huge amount of opportunity and we have to ride this wave to making change.” The piece added that “activists plan to pressure members of Congress to hold town halls to discuss immigration and force leaders to take a stand when confronted by their constituents.”

The Wall Street Journal (6/30, Raice, Barrett, Duehren, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reported that protesters said they were angry at President Trump’s actions on immigration, and insisted that the world needs to see a different picture of the US. They carried signs saying, “No child should be kept in a cage” and “Keep families together” and “Immigrants make America great.”

The Arizona Republic (6/30, Carranza, Larson, Steinbach, Janetsky, 1.21M) reported that some “800 people gathered outside the state Capitol building in Phoenix. Many carried signs urging the administration to bring families back together.” They encountered “small groups of counterprotesters with megaphones. Some engaged, but the event was mostly peaceful.”

Also covering the story were the Orlando (FL) Sentinel (6/30, Santana, 593K), the Atlanta Journal-Constitution (6/30, Hansen, 1.09M), the Asbury Park (NJ) Press (6/30, Mickle, 386K), and Newsday (NY) (6/30, Chayes, 1.52M).

Trump Administration Accused Of Separating Immigrant Families Who Sought Asylum At Ports Of Entry.

The Los Angeles Times (7/1, Esquivel, 4.03M) reports that “the practice of separating families appears to have begun accelerating last year, long before zero tolerance was announced in the spring. Among these cases, according to records and interviews, are many that happened at ports of entry” as immigrants sought asylum in the US. The article adds, “Administration officials have said repeatedly that asylum seekers who don’t want to be separated from their children should present themselves at a port of entry. Doing so is the legal way to ask for asylum, they said.” However, court documents “describe numerous cases in recent months in which families were separated after presenting themselves at a port of entry to ask for asylum.” Attorneys contend that this happened even when asylum seekers had identification and documents proving they were the children’s parents.

DOJ Files Documents Which Indicate Administration May Want To Detain Immigrant Families Longer Than The Current Legal Limit.

The Washington Post (6/29, Barrett, 15.68M) reported that the Justice Department on Friday revealed “plans to detain migrant families together in custody rather than release them, according to a new court filing that suggests such detentions could last longer than the 20 days envisioned by a court settlement.” The article added that “the filing comes as the Justice Departments seeks to navigate two different court edicts – an injunction issued this week by a federal judge in San Diego that required the government to begin reuniting the roughly 2,000 migrant children still separated from their families, and an older court settlement in federal court in Los Angeles that requires the immigration agencies to release minors in their custody if they are held for more than 20 days.”

Politico (6/29, Gerstein, 3.51M) reported that only “days after President Donald Trump announced that his administration would ask a federal court to permit detention of immigrant families by modifying a longstanding court settlement, Justice Department lawyers told the Los Angeles-based judge handling the case Friday that no change to the decree may be needed.” Attorneys for the government contend that “a separate injunction a federal judge in San Diego issued Tuesday barring family separations effectively wipes out provisions in the decades-old Flores agreement that have been determined to bar detention of most children in immigration custody for more than 20 days.” They wrote, “The rulings work together to permit detention of parents with their minor children with whom they are apprehended.”

The Hill (6/29, Bowden, 2.71M) reported that the Administration may

seek to “detain migrant families together for months at detention facilities as they await prosecution for illegal entry, according to a court filing from the Justice Department.” While the filing did not specify the potential length of time immigrant families would be detained, immigration proceedings typically take months.

Administration Still Dealing With “Fallout” From Zero Tolerance Policy.

The AP (7/1, Long, Alonso-Zaldivar) reports that in recent Senate testimony, HHS Secretary Alex Azar “could barely conceal his discomfort” as a Democratic senator asked “whether his agency had a role in designing the Trump administration’s ‘zero tolerance’ policy that caused” immigrant children to be separated from their parents. Azar responded, “We deal with the children once they’re given to us. ... So we don’t – we are not the experts on immigration.” The article says separating families “while sidelining the agency responsible for caring for the children was only one example of a communication breakdown in the federal government that left immigrant children in limbo, parents in the dark about their whereabouts and enraged Americans across the country.” The Administration “is still dealing with the fallout: It’s still not clear how officials will implement the policy or comply with a court order requiring that families be reunited within 30 days. Instead, the administration is hoping Congress will fix the mess.”

Congress Leaves For Recess Without Voting On Bill To End Separation Of Immigrant Families.

USA Today (6/29, Kelly, 11.4M) reported that “House and Senate leaders had expressed hope that Congress could act quickly this week to pass a narrow bill that would allow migrant children to remain with their parents at detention centers beyond the current 20-day limit,” but

"both chambers adjourned Thursday without a solution. They will return on July 9."

Top House Dems Want HHS-OIG, Other Agency Watchdogs To Investigate Administration's Zero Tolerance Policy.

The Hill (6/29, Weixel, 2.71M) reported that "top House Democrats are asking federal agency watchdogs for a broad investigation" into the Administration's zero-tolerance immigration policies, "including the separation of children from their parents, as well as the recent executive order intended to partially roll them back." The lawmakers sent a letter Friday to the inspectors general of HHS, DHS, and the Department of Justice asking for a review of the Administration's "entire process for planning and implementing its immigration plan." The letter was signed by Reps. Elijah E. Cummings (D-MD), Jerry Nadler (D-NY), Bennie Thompson (D-MS), Bobby Scott (D-VA), and Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), the "top Democrats on the House Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, the Judiciary, Homeland Security, Education and the Workforce, and Energy and Commerce."

Dems In Connecticut Denied Access To Immigrant Child Separated From Parents.

Vox (6/29, Kirby, 1.66M) reported that on Friday, Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT), Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT) sought "to visit a child separated from their family who was being housed in a nonprofit facility in Groton, Connecticut." But HHS "denied the lawmakers access, according to Murphy." He tweeted, "The perverse secrecy of child separation should concern us all." Murphy added, "HHS' excuse was that we need to give 14 days notice. ... What?? 14 days of forced separation from your parent can traumatize a

kid for life. And we aren't asking to see nuclear codes – we just wanted 10 min to make sure the child is ok.” An HHS official “said that a visit from the members had not been approved, and confirmed that HHS requires a two-week notification, at minimum, to make sure tours don't interfere with the care of unaccompanied alien children.”

Court Documents Allege Border Agent Wished Immigrant “Happy Mother's Day” After Informing Her Of Impending Separation From Daughter.

The Arizona Republic (6/29, Ruelas, 1.21M) reported, “A Guatemalan woman said in a federal complaint filed this week that a Border Patrol agent in an Arizona detention facility, after informing her that her daughter would be taken away, mockingly wished her a happy Mother's Day.” The American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts is representing the woman in the lawsuit. Attorneys “say they've filed an emergency lawsuit to immediately reunite” the woman “with her daughter, who is only identified in court filings by the initials S.K. They argue that the continued separation violates the due process rights, as well as the Constitution's guarantee of equal protection.”

Immigrant Families Still Separated As “Outrage” Over Zero Tolerance Policy Grows.

ABC World News Tonight 📺 Video (6/29, story 6, 0:40, Muir, 6.53M) reported that despite the growing “outrage” over the Trump Administration's zero-tolerance policy, immigrant children remain separated from their parents. Congress left for recess without passing an immigration bill. The segment mentioned that during her last visit to the border, First Lady Melania Trump was shown “pictures of the six-year-old boy left alone in the desert, possibly by smugglers.” That boy

has since been transferred to HHS' custody.

Some 2,000 Immigrant Children Remain Separated From Their Parents Despite Judge's Order To Reunite Them.

The New York Times (6/30, Correal, 19.33M) reported that despite "protests being held around the country on Saturday to demand the reunification of parents and children separated at the border, progress on putting families back together has been painfully slow." The article said in spite of "a federal judge's order requiring reunification within 30 days, more than 2,000 children remain scattered across 17 states, including some 300 in New York." The piece added that "their parents too have been sent around the country – to detention centers in Arizona, Colorado and as far away as Washington State." While HHS "cit[ed] the possibility that human traffickers might pose as parents [and] said that the government intends to aggressively 'vet' those who wish to gain custody of children," the Times said officials "declined to say how many children had been reunited with their relatives since President Trump ended the separation policy with an executive order."

Sponsors, Parents Reportedly Face High Transport Fees, Red Tape Before They Can Be Reunited With Immigrant Children.

The New York Times (7/1, Jordan, 19.33M) reports on the transport fees and red tape facing the sponsors and parents of immigrant children. The article mentions that "Brenda, a Salvadoran [im]migrant who was separated from her 7-year-old son Kevin at the border on May 27, was charged \$576.20 to cover the boy's airfare from Miami to Virginia. His escort collected the money order at Washington Dulles airport on Friday upon handing over the child to his mother." This is just one of the many "hurdles" sponsors and immigrant parents must

overcome in order to be reunited with children. The piece adds that HHS' "Office of Refugee Resettlement, which has official custody of migrant children under detention and establishes conditions for releasing them, has made it clear that the requirements are intended to make sure children are not released to traffickers, and will be well cared for in their new homes."

CNN (6/29, 82.6M) featured footage of Brenda's reunion with her son at Dulles.

Advocates In New York Seek To Teach Separated Immigrant Children About Their Legal Rights.

The Wall Street Journal (7/1, West, Campo-Flores, Texas, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reports that advocates in New York are attempting to teach immigrant children separated from their parents about their legal rights. They must use creative methods because many of these children are too young to understand the concept, and some are illiterate. The article mentions that the children are in HHS' custody, while their parents are being held by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Guatemalan Girl Reunited With Mother After Two-Month Separation.

The Washington Post (7/1, Rozsa, 15.68M) reports on the reunification of a 7-year-old Guatemalan girl who was separated from her family for almost two months by US border officials. The child's mother, Buena Ventura Martin-Godinez, said, "I'm so happy, so happy. ... I didn't know when I would see her again." She added, "She's happy now, but she

wants her daddy,” who remains in detention and faces deportation, adding, “She told me she never, ever wants to be away from her family again.”

The AP (7/1, Replogle, Kennedy) reports, “The little girl was in the custody of a child welfare agency in Michigan and made heartbreaking calls to her mother, asking when they’d be reunited.”

Guatemalan Mother Detained In Arizona Begins Road Trip To New York City To Find Her Children.

The Arizona Republic (7/1, Oza, 1.21M) spotlights Yeni Maricela Gonzalez Garcia, a Guatemalan immigrant who spent a month separated from her three children while detained, who is now driving with a volunteer to New York City to find her children.

Children Representing Themselves In Immigration Courts.

CNN (6/30, Kopan, 82.6M) reported on immigrant children who are coming before immigration judges to “fight for permission to stay in the country.” The article features an immigration attorney whose client was a “crying toddler” that “frazzled” the judge because “she couldn’t believe it.” CNN added, “Toddlers and infants do, in fact, appear before judges in the system to defend themselves against deportation.” The piece cites immigration law experts who “have long opposed the idea of children being able to represent themselves.”

Immigration Playing "Outsized" Role In Arizona's Midterms.

The AP (7/1) reports, "The outrage sparked by the sights, sounds and stories of children separated from parents at the U.S.-Mexico border underscores the outsized role immigration will play in the midterms in Arizona." The article says candidates from both parties are emphasizing immigration as they campaign. The piece adds that for many Arizonans, "the immigration issue is personal," because data indicate "more than 13 percent of Arizona's population as of 2015 were individuals who were born in another country."

Following Visits To Immigration Detention Centers, It Remains To Be Seen What Action First Lady Will Take.

The AP (6/30, Kellman) reported on First Lady Melania Trump's recent visits to the border during which she toured immigrant detention centers. The article said, "Now the question is what she does with that knowledge – and how she meshes it with her dislike for dividing up families and a concurrent belief in strong borders." Stephanie Grisham, a spokeswoman for Mrs. Trump, "says more border visits or talks with lawmakers are possible, but it's not clear what lessons the first lady took from her visits and what she'll communicate to her husband." Grisham added, "She cares about children deeply. ... She also believes in strong border laws and treating everybody equally."

Trump Criticizes Dems Who Are Pushing For ICE To Be Abolished.

The New York Times (7/1, Cochrane, 19.33M) reports that President Trump is attacking "Democratic lawmakers who have called for abolishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement, seeking to seize

political advantage on an issue that has put him on the defensive for weeks and offer a winning message for Republicans facing a forbidding midterm election." During an interview with Fox News' "Sunday Morning Futures," Trump said, "You get rid of ICE, you're going to have a country that you're going to be afraid to walk out of your house." The article adds that Trump also urged "Democratic candidates to embrace demands to dissolve the agency, saying that doing so would doom the party at the polls. 'They're going to get beaten so badly,'" he said.

The Washington Times (7/1, Boyer, 460K) reports Trump "said Sunday that Democrats 'will never win another election' if they keep pushing to abolish Immigration and Customs Enforcement."

In The Face Of Growing Criticism, Trump Defends ICE.

On its front page, the Washington Post (6/30, A1, Nakamura, 15.68M) reported that President Trump "opened a new front in the immigration debate, diverting attention away from his administration's treatment of undocumented immigrants to a broader fight over the federal agency charged with detaining and deporting them." According to the Post, the President in a pair of tweets "forcefully defended the performance of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and lambasted Democrats for pushing a 'radical left' agenda to abolish it, even though only a handful have publicly supported doing so." The article mentioned that once immigrant children are separated from their parents, they are turned over to HHS.

ICE Acting Director Accused Of Perpetuating Falsehood About Zero Tolerance Policy.

The [Huffington Post](#) (6/29, Fang, 4.32M) reported that on Friday, Thomas Homan, acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "perpetuated President Donald Trump's lie that Congress is responsible for the Trump administration's zero tolerance policy of separating young, undocumented immigrant children from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border." Homan said, "We are enforcing the laws that they enacted. ... We're out, doing our sworn oath, enforcing the laws that they enacted, and they're going to vilify us for doing it."

ICE Raids Reportedly Separating Children From Immigrant Parents.

The [Washington Post](#) (6/30, 15.68M) reported that while the Administration promises "to reunite families separated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the U.S. border, a similar crisis continues unabated within the country's interior, where children are separated from their undocumented parents with little scrutiny and increasing frequency." ICE has, in recent months, "carried out the three biggest workplace immigration raids of the past decade, including one on June 5 at a nursery here in rural Ohio, where 114 gardeners, florists and other workers were detained and put into court proceedings for deportation." Many had lived for several years in a nearby "trailer park of 74 homes known as Little Mexico, where now aid workers estimate that more than 90 children are missing one parent and at least 20 are left with no parent at all."

Advocates Say Separated Immigrant Parents Are Failing Asylum Screenings Because They Are Too Distraught.

The [Huffington Post](#) (6/30, Chapin, 4.32M) reported that advocates say immigrant parents who have been separated from their children "are

too devastated to prepare for their court hearings. Instead, they replay the moment their kids were taken away by Border Patrol, worry about their children's well-being, and ask repeatedly where their sons and daughters are. In some cases, they simply weep." One activist said "over half of the roughly 20 parents she spoke with on Thursday did not pass their 'credible fear' interviews – a process that determines a person's asylum eligibility." She is convinced the parents "are too distressed about their children to effectively tell an asylum officer why they fled their country and could be killed upon return."

Some Concerned Immigrant Children Separated From Parents Could Be Put Up For Adoption.

The Arizona Republic (6/29, White, 1.21M) reported, "Since the Trump administration's zero-tolerance border policy led to the separation of more than 2,300 immigrant children from their relatives since early May, some have wondered: Could these kids end up being adopted by American families?" Some immigrants allege they heard border agents say some of the separated children would be adopted after their parents were deported. HHS "has insisted that separated minors will soon be reunited with their relatives. Foster and adoption agencies have said separated children need to be with their families and will never be put up for adoption." However, "there are a number of scenarios that could complicate that."

The Detroit Free Press (6/30, Baldas, 1.21M) reported that Bethany Christian Services in Michigan insists that separated immigrant parents and children are being reunited. Bethany said the more than 50 children in the state "will not be adopted. These children have families, and we will continue to pursue reunification with their families."

Nonprofit Says Its Database Could Help Unite Separated Immigrant Children With Parents.

The Dallas Morning News (6/29, Solis, 1.05M) reported, "A nonprofit has created a database that could help more than 2,000 immigrant children be swiftly reconnected with their parents even as lawyers and advocates become increasingly frustrated about not knowing where many of the children are." The article said this "database will allow parents and legal representatives who are trying to locate separated children to submit inquiries by phone and email," and "from there, the Vera Institute of Justice, a New York-based nonprofit, and its partners hope to connect the families with attorneys to work on the immigrants' legal cases."

Experts Say More Central American Children Are Immigrating To The US Because Of Violence, Lack Of Opportunities.

The Washington Post (6/29, Schwartz, 15.68M) examined why so many children from Central America are coming to the US. Experts attribute this trend to "economic factors and violence and insecurity. The first group includes the lack of economic opportunity, including a lack of jobs or inadequate opportunities for education. The second group includes violence and victimization, not just by gangs, other criminal groups and state security forces but at home as well."

More Commentary.

The New York Times (6/29, 19.33M) said in an editorial that separating families caught illegally crossing the US-Mexico border exemplifies

"cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation." The Times added, "The Trump administration has committed a gross offense," and urged all Americans to "demand that it promptly reunite these children with their parents."

Author and former Border Patrol agent Francisco Cantú wrote in a New York Times (6/30, 19.33M) op-ed that it is crucial "to understand that the crisis of separation manufactured by the Trump administration is only the most visibly abhorrent manifestation of a decades-long project to create a 'state of exception' along our southern border." He added, "The logic of deterrence is not unlike that of war: It has transformed the border into a state of exception where some of the most vulnerable people on earth face death and disappearance and where children are torn from their parents to send the message You are not safe here. In this sense, the situation at the border has reached a point of crisis – not one of criminality but of disregard for human life."

Jennifer Rubin writes in the Washington Post (7/1, 15.68M) "Right Turn" blog that "President Trump is prepared to incarcerate entire families for indeterminate periods of time for what has been traditionally treated as a misdemeanor." She argues, "This is as inhumane as it is wasteful and dangerous; rather than use resources to go after drug runners and human trafficking and other serious offenses, the administration will be spending resources to stand guard over families."

Alexandra F. Levy, a senior staff attorney at the Human Trafficking Legal Center, wrote in a Washington Post (6/29, 15.68M) op-ed about "who stands to gain from the Trump administration's immigration policies." She said it is not immigrant children or their parents or even the US. Rather, it is the "two largest private prison contractors in the

United States, GEO Group and CoreCivic,” which “house thousands of immigrant detainees across the country. These corporations now face allegations that they force immigrant detainees to perform unpaid labor inside their facilities.”

Sarah Lustbader, a former public defender, writes in the Washington Post (7/1, Lustbader, 15.68M) that the Administration’s defense of its family separation policy “boiled down to the following: The child’s suffering is the price the parent must pay for breaking the rules. Children are, in essence, collateral damage.” Lustbader points out, “Every day, we lock parents up for decades in our prisons regardless of how it will affect their children, and no one bats an eye.” She concludes, “We should be demanding more humanity of our system across the board – not just at the border.”

In an editorial, USA Today (7/1, 11.4M) writes, “Sometime in the not-too-distant future, the United States could face simultaneous crises, and the word of the White House would be crucial.” The editorial goes on to say that “most Americans have come to recognize Trump’s long and sordid abuse of facts,” and “in recent weeks, his falsehoods have come even faster and with greater vigor.” The editorial questions whether the White House will have the requisite credibility when that crisis comes.

Anthony Scaramucci, former White House director of communications, writes in USA Today (7/1, Scaramucci, 11.4M) that following the “child separation fiasco, President Donald Trump doesn’t have a credibility problem – but his chief of staff and the Democrats do.” Scaramucci takes issue with the “messaging” of the policy. He concludes, “The president wants to find common ground, but the ‘resistance’ is peddling false narratives to avoid making a deal,” adding, “the Democrats, not the president, have the real credibility problem.”

The Secretary in the News

Judge Strikes Down Kentucky's Medicaid Work Rules.

The New York Times (6/29, Goodnough, 19.33M) reported that US District Judge James Boasberg on Friday "blocked Kentucky's closely watched plan to require many Medicaid recipients to work, volunteer or train for a job as a condition of coverage." The Times said the ruling in the Kentucky case "is the first on this issue, but it will almost certainly not be the last; the question may wind up before a more conservative Supreme Court with two Trump appointees." The Trump Administration and the state of Kentucky had argued "that Congress gave the health and human services secretary broad discretion to approve Medicaid demonstration projects. Lawyers for the administration also argued that" HHS Secretary Alex Azar "provided plenty of evidence that working improves health." Judge Boasberg disagreed, saying, "While the ultimate decision whether to grant approval rests with the secretary, his discretion is not boundless."

NPR (6/29, Kodjak, 3.55M) reported that in Friday's ruling, Judge Boasberg "called the Trump administration's approval of the program, Kentucky HEALTH, 'arbitrary and capricious.'" He writes "that in approving Kentucky's work requirement proposal, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar 'never adequately considered whether Kentucky HEALTH would in fact help the state furnish medical assistance to its citizens, a central objective of Medicaid.'"

The Washington Post (6/29, Sun, Goldstein, 15.68M) reported that Boasberg's decision "sends the state's program, Kentucky HEALTH, back to the federal Department of Health and Human Services for further review." Bloomberg News (6/29, 4.46M) reported Trump's HHS department "'never adequately considered whether Kentucky Health would in fact help the state furnish medical assistance to its citizens, a central objective of Medicaid,' Boasberg wrote."

Reuters (6/29, Raymond) reported Kentucky "was the first of four states to receive approval from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to require that able-bodied Medicaid recipients work at least 80 hours a month or lose their benefits." Kentucky "said the judge had blocked the program on the 'narrow basis' that HHS failed to consider its impact on Medicaid coverage, and that the state would work with HHS to address that problem so the program could take effect." Adam Meier, secretary of Kentucky's health department, is quoted saying, "'We will have no choice but to make significant benefit reductions' without implementing the work requirements."

The Wall Street Journal (6/29, Armour, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reported that Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Administrator Verma said, "We are conferring with the Department of Justice to chart a path forward." Verma added, "In the meantime, we will continue to

support innovative, state-driven policies that are designed to advance the objectives of the Medicaid program by improving health outcomes for thousands of low-income Americans.”

The AP (6/29, Beam, Alonso-Zaldivar) reported the national implications of Friday’s ruling “could take a while to sort out. Officials in Arkansas have already implemented similar work requirement rules there.” The drive “to expand Medicaid in GOP-led states had gotten a boost from the prospect of work requirements, which appeal to conservatives. In Virginia, work requirements are part of a compromise between Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam and Republican legislators to expand Medicaid.”

The Washington Examiner (6/29, Leonard, 340K) reported the requirements “would have gone into effect Sunday. Republican Gov. Matt Bevin had threatened to discontinue Medicaid expansion in the state, which covers more than 500,000 people, if the requirements were struck down.”

Additional coverage is provided by CNN (6/29, Luhby, 82.6M), Congressional Quarterly (6/29, Subscription Publication), Forbes (6/29, Japsen, 10.34M), Fortune (6/29, 3.91M), Healthcare Finance News (6/29, 93K), The Hill (6/29, Weixel, 2.71M), the Huffington Post (6/29, Young, 4.32M), Kaiser Health News (6/29), Modern Healthcare (6/29, Subscription Publication, 239K), the Louisville (KY) Courier-Journal (6/29, 419K), Politico (6/29, Pradhan, 3.51M), Vox (6/29, 1.66M), and the Detroit Free Press (6/29, Spangler, 1.21M).

Unaccompanied Alien Children

Suit Filed Against HHS Alleges “A Wide Range Of Abuses” Against Unaccompanied Minors.

USA Today (6/29, Gomez, 11.4M) reported that on Friday, several legal groups filed a lawsuit accusing HHS “of mistreating unaccompanied minors in its custody, ordering them to take psychotropic drugs without their relatives’ consent and making it overly difficult to reunite them with family.” The suit was filed on behalf of “five minors who allege a wide range of abuses at the hands of contractors who run shelters for Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement.” One of the children, “a 12-year-old boy from Guatemala who has been in custody since February, has allegedly been administered psychotropic drugs to treat depression that he developed while in custody.” The suit says “the boy refused to continue taking the medication because it hurt his stomach, which led shelter officials to transfer him to a psychiatric institution without consulting his adult sister, who had been trying to win his release.”

The Washington Post (6/29, Davis, 15.68M) reported that the lawsuit alleges the 12-year-old boy “went from being calm and cooperative to

showing signs of depression brought on by 'being kept from his family,'" which had crossed into the US illegally ahead of him. Leecia Welch, an attorney for the National Center for Youth Law, one of the groups that brought the case, said, "Basic due-process rights" are being "trampled" by the Trump Administration. She added that "parents of children are going through the ringer trying to get their kids out of these detention facilities."

The Wall Street Journal (6/29, Lazo, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reported that the suit is seeking class-action status. The five children are from Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Mexico. It names HHS Secretary Alex Azar and ORR Director E. Scott Lloyd as defendants.

The Hill (6/30, Anapol, 2.71M) reported that the suit was "filed Friday in a federal court in California." The five children range in age from 12 to 17, and they all arrived in the US as unaccompanied minors. The suit "alleges that the minors have been held in 'jail-like' conditions and experienced 'cruel' practices, including being prescribed antidepressants, that may result in lifelong trauma and 'emotional harm.'"

NBC News (6/30, Mandell, 5.76M) and Newsweek (6/30, Hutzler, 2.18M) also covered the story.

House GOP Seeks Answers From Azar About ORR.

The Hill (6/29, Hellmann, 2.71M) reported that Republicans on the House Energy & Commerce Committee have sent a letter to HHS Secretary Alex Azar asking for answers about the Office of Refugee Resettlement. The article said the lawmakers "asked for answers to a series of questions about children in ORR custody, including: how many are in ORR custody as a result of being separated from their parents or families; does ORR have the resources to properly care for the high number of children being transferred to their custody; what steps is ORR taking to track and address issues of abuse within HHS funded facilities and what medications is ORR authorized to administer." The letter stated, "Given HHS' historical difficulties in properly caring for [the children], the committee believes that additional scrutiny of ORR is warranted at this time."

Fake Story About HHS Losing Immigrant Children Resulted In Discovery Of Separations At The Southern Border.

On its website, ABC News (6/30, Pearle, 1.85M) reported that the story about HHS losing almost 1,500 immigrant children was untrue, yet "it was enough to outrage politicians, stir up journalists and make the public ask questions. Chasing this misleading story...helped uncover a story that many found even more troubling. And this one was real." The article said that in April, "Steven Wagner, an official at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) who oversees programs that place unaccompanied minors with families, told a Senate committee that a department office 'was unable to determine with certainty the whereabouts of 1,475 unaccompanied alien children' who had been placed with sponsors living in the United States." In May,

Deputy HHS Secretary Eric Hargan “disputed what was becoming a widespread narrative, saying these children were not ‘lost’ but had simply been placed with friends and extended family members” who could not be reached. The piece added that while investigating this story, reporters uncovered the Trump Administration’s policy of separating immigrant families at the southern border.

HHS in the News

HHS’ Severino Speaks At National Right To Life Conference.

The Wichita (KS) Eagle (6/29, Burgess, 316K) reported Roger Severino, who directs the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office for Civil Rights, was the featured speaker at the National Right to Life convention Thursday, becoming the first HHS official “in recent memory” to speak at the nation’s largest anti-abortion organization. Severino said in his remarks, “Our president is fearless when it comes to life and conscience,” adding, “We’re just getting started.”

Several Mid-Level HHS Officials Reportedly Emulating Trump In Tweets.

Politico (6/29, Diamond, 3.51M) profiled several “midlevel political appointees at the Health and Human Services Department who have helped shape the agency’s communications strategy – even while taking a page out of President Donald Trump’s playbook” by emulating his “taunts and gibes” on Twitter. According to Politico, the behavior “suggest[s] that some officials feel empowered to mimic the president even while representing the government to millions of taxpayers and working alongside career federal employees.” The article added that the tweeting “also raises questions about whether any officials are violating the Hatch Act, which is intended to ban most federal personnel from bringing politics into the workplace.” The piece mentioned officials such as Gavin Smith, “an HHS staffer who identifies himself as deputy communications director,” Ximena Barreto, “a deputy communications director who worked on the Trump campaign,” and Jon Cordova, “the principal deputy assistant secretary for administration.”

CMS Looking For Chief Health Informatics Officer.

MedCity News (6/29, Dietsche) reported the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services “is seeking a chief health informatics officer, according to a job posting on USAjobs.gov.” The individual chosen for the role “will develop requirements and content for health-related information technology with an initial focus on improving innovation and

interoperability.”

CMS Releases Payment Data, Reveals Drug And Medical Device Company Contributions.

The Washington Examiner (6/29, King, 340K) reported that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released its 2017 payment information on Friday. Data show drug and medical device companies provided “\$8.4 billion to doctors and teaching hospitals,” that year. According to the figures, “the biggest amount, \$4.7 billion, went to research. Coming in second was \$2.82 billion for general payments, which include items such as meals, travel to speaking events, and speaking fees.”

National Guard Soldiers May Have Sleep Problems After Returning Home From The Battlefield, Research Suggests.

Reuters (6/29, Weinstock) reported that research suggests “National Guard soldiers may be plagued with sleep problems when they return home from the battlefield.” The findings were published online in Sleep Health. Reuters added, “Michael Twery, director of the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research at the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute...told Reuters Health by phone that while the study was a

small one and needs to be replicated in larger groups of soldiers, it
'(lays) a foundation to help us design more definitive studies of sleep in
this population.'"

Federal Officials Say Romaine Lettuce-Linked E. Coli Outbreak Is Officially Over.

The Los Angeles Times (6/29, Millman, 4.03M) reported that Federal officials have said the E. coli outbreak tied to Yuma, AZ-grown romaine lettuce is officially over. The CDC has found no "new cases from the outbreak, which started in mid-March and infected people in 36 states." The Times reported, "Dirty irrigation canal water is expected to have caused the outbreak, Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said Thursday, and officials are investigating how the bacteria got into the water." Meanwhile, the CDC reported "the last E. coli case from this outbreak June 6."

The New York Times (7/1, Jacobs, 19.33M) reports, "Samples of canal water in the Yuma area of Arizona were found to contain the same genetic strain of E. coli that caused the outbreak, Dr. Scott Gottlieb, commissioner of the federal Food and Drug Administration, said in a statement." Dr. Gottlieb said, "More work needs to be done to determine just how and why this strain of E. coli O157: H7 could have gotten into this body of water and how that led to contamination of romaine lettuce from multiple farms."

Emergency Departments Struggling Through Shortages Of Crucial Drugs.

The New York Times (7/1, Thomas, 19.33M) reports that emergency departments nationwide are struggling with shortages of "crucial drugs like morphine, which is used to ease the pain of injuries like broken bones, or diltiazem, a heart drug." The Times adds, "For years, drug shortages have created a behind-the-scenes scramble as pharmacists, doctors and nurses cobble together fixes that are often invisible to patients," but physicians "around the country say the latest shortages are more directly affecting patient care." A survey of emergency physicians in May by the American College of Emergency Physicians "found that 9 of 10 said they didn't have access to critical medicines, and nearly 4 in 10 said that patients had been negatively affected." FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb "acknowledged in an interview that while the agency has made progress, it has not solved the underlying problem," saying, "We are still in the position of trying to put a Band-Aid on a market that fundamentally hasn't changed."

Amazon's PillPack Deal Unlikely To Impact Drug Costs, Analysts Say.

The Wall Street Journal (6/29, Rockoff, Walker, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reported that Amazon's deal to purchase PillPack may make filling prescriptions more convenient, but is unlikely to address

prescription drug costs, according to industry experts. Those experts suggested that Amazon may be able to negotiate to offer generic versions of medications, but that the main issue with US drug spending is rising cost driven by high-priced biotech therapies, which often must be injected or infused, and which retail pharmacies don't dispense. However, the deal threatens to shift market share from the 64,500 US retail pharmacies, and some analysts suggest Amazon could be looking to take over the role of pharmacy-benefit managers, which currently negotiate drug discounts for insurers and employers.


Meanwhile, CNBC (6/29, Lovelace, 4.81M) reported, "FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb says Amazon's new push into health care is just fine because anything that makes much needed products, like pharmaceuticals, more accessible to consumers and lowers costs is a positive." In a June 29 interview with CNBC's "Squawk Box," Gottlieb said, "Disruptive competition is a good thing."

First Cannabis-Based Prescription Drug Approved By FDA Marks "Watershed" Moment, Industry Members Say.

Bloomberg News (6/29, Buckley, 4.46M) reported GW Pharmaceuticals has received FDA approval for its medical marijuana treatment "Epidiolex, a prescription drug for children with severe epilepsy," which has been "genetically modified to remove the psychoactive properties." As the "first prescription medicine derived from cannabis permitted to be sold in the U.S.," the drug's approval has been heralded by some industry members as "a watershed event" that the piece said "should help alleviate skepticism among some physicians about the plant's

medical uses.”

FDA Commissioner Comments On Efforts To Stem Online Opioid Sales.

CNBC’s Squawk Box  Video (6/29, 85K) reported on the FDA’s summit with Facebook, Google, Twitter, and other Internet companies seeking their help in cracking down on online opioid sales. In an interview, FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb said, “In 2015, there was data that came out that showed \$15 million of online sales, but we’re seeing more and more of the sales being shifted to the online I think as we start to reduce lawful prescribing, so a lot of the medical – a lot of the addiction was people got medically addicted as we see doctors start to prescribe fewer opioids, we’re fearful that more and more of the new addiction is going to shift to illicit sources, and a lot of those sales are taking place online.” Gottlieb characterized big Internet companies as having “been helpful” and said that “we’ve been working with them for some period of time now.”

FDA Report Suggests Ways To Improve Its Hiring Process.

Congressional Quarterly (6/29, Siddons, Subscription Publication) reported that the FDA issued a new report that showed that the agency

"sees ways that its ability to hire qualified staff could be improved, even after Congress granted it new hiring authorities at the end of 2016." The report noted that the new authorities it was granted "included the ability to offer higher salaries for some positions." The report largely "focuses on ways that the FDA has been implementing new hire authorities, including which positions it is designating for higher pay scales and how it has sped up its hiring process in several areas."

FDA Policy Limiting Blood Donations From Gay Men Draws Scrutiny.

The Kansas City (MO) Star (6/29, Randle, 636K) reported an FDA policy from 1983 requiring blood banks "to prohibit men who have sex with men from donating blood, blood components or plasma" has become "a point of contention for many in the LGBT community who viewed it as archaic and stigmatizing in a time when HIV is less of a threat." The FDA in 2015 "amended its ban to a '12 month deferment' policy, allowing men to donate blood as long as they haven't had sex with other men for the past year," but skeptics continue to argue against it. The piece adds that FDA spokeswoman Megan McSeveney said the agency is "fully committed in its actions to facilitate change" and is seeking new means to evaluate blood donors.

FDA Warns Pfizer Over "Misleading" Consumer Video.

STAT Plus (6/29, Silverman, Subscription Publication, 27K) reported the Food and Drug Administration “scolded” Pfizer “over a consumer video that created a ‘misleading impression’ of the Estring vaginal ring because there was no risk information.” In a June 19 letter, the FDA “argued the video ‘misleadingly suggests that patients will experience similar results’” as the person depicted in the video, and the FDA “complained this was ‘especially concerning from a public health perspective’ because Estring product labeling mentions several serious, life-threatening risks, including two forms of cancer.”

Op-Ed Touts FDA Allowance Of Off-Label Healthcare Economic Discussions.

In STAT (6/29, 27K) “First Opinion,” John Osborn, a senior advisor with Hogan Lovells and a visiting scholar at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and Seth Ray, a senior counsel with O’Melveny & Myers, touted the Trump Administration’s issuance of “final guidance that allows drug companies and device makers to provide health care economic and other supporting information to payers and formulary committees, even if the information is outside of the FDA approved labeling and was not submitted to the agency in the course of product approval.” They suggested that this development “raises the question of whether the agency will take steps to allow companies to provide truthful off-label information to physicians and patients in other contexts.” They noted that “in April, FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb signaled that an expanded safe harbor was coming soon that would provide a ‘more robust framework’ to allow companies to discuss the value proposition and health economic benefits of off-label uses.”

Maple Syrup Producers, Beekeepers Oppose FDA's "Added Sugars" Label.

The AP (7/1) reports that the FDA's "added sugars" labeling is being opposed by maple syrup producers and beekeepers. The agency "has received more than 3,000 comments on its proposal, most of which are from honey and maple syrup producers, the Wisconsin Public Radio reported." The AP reports, "The FDA said that it's looking forward to 'working with stakeholders to devise a sensible solution,' but the "agency said it acknowledges that the feedback from producers indicates that their proposal 'does not provide the clarity that the FDA intended.'"

CDC Director Changes Stance On Use Of Condoms To Prevent STDs.

The AP (6/29, Stobbe) reported that CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield Jr. "once opposed condoms and needle exchange programs as ways to stop the spread of sexually transmitted diseases." But this week, he said during an interview that "his views have changed." He told the AP that "it has become clear to him that condoms and needle exchanges work as part of comprehensive programs to stop the spread of certain

infectious diseases." Redfield was quoted as saying, "One thing I can commit to is CDC is not an opinion organization. It's a science-based, data-driven organization." Speaking about the AIDS epidemic, he added, "We do have the tools to end this epidemic. Let's use them."

CDC Map Illustrates Incidence Of Pediatric Cancer In Different US Regions.

On its website, [NBC News](#) (6/29, 5.76M) reported a new CDC [map](#) of cancers in the US indicates pediatric "cancer rates are the highest in the Northeast and lowest in the South," that leukemia "is more common in the western states," and "rates of pediatric lymphoma and brain cancer are higher in the Northeast." Lead report author CDC epidemiologist Dr. David Siegel wrote, "Variation in childhood cancer incidence might be related to differences in exposures to carcinogenic chemicals (e.g., air pollution, secondhand smoke, food, or drinking water) or radiation." The piece added, "there might be genetic variations in different populations. Inherited genetics account for about 5 percent of all childhood cancer, the National Cancer Institute says." The NCI was quoted as saying that in adults, certain "gene mutations reflect the cumulative effects of aging and long-term exposure to cancer-causing substances."

[Health Exec](#) (6/29, Leider) reported the CDC study sourced "data for 2003-2014 from the National Program of Cancer Registries and the National Cancer Institute's Surveillance," a period during which "171,432 cases of pediatric cancer were identified – an incidence rate of 173.7 cases per one million children."

House Legislators Seek More Transparency From FNIH Concerning Donors.

Science Magazine (6/29, Mervis, 441K) reported a House appropriations subcommittee is concerned that the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) may not be adhering to funding disclosure rules dictated by the Public Health Service Act (PHSA). Science said the House report specifically addressed identifying donors "who have attached strings to their gift by labeling them as 'anonymous.'" However, FNIH senior vice president of research partnerships David Wholley said, "We have the responsibility...to do these partnerships that support the NIH mission. ... And we have always complied with the law." FNIH development office head Julie Wolf-Rodda said, "The lion's share of anonymous gifts are from a relative of someone who was treated at the NIH Clinical Center...and doesn't want their name listed in the annual report." The piece noted that "NIH Director Francis Collins canceled a \$100-million study on the effects of moderate alcohol drinking" following "an investigation found NIH staff had improperly solicited industry directly and shaped the study to satisfy industry interests."

NCI Research Funding Priorities Following Budget Increases Outlined.

In a paywalled piece, the [Cancer Letter](#) (6/29, Ong) reported on the NCI's funding priorities after receiving "a \$147 million increase to the Research Grant Project pool," \$60 million for "targeted research opportunities," "a \$20 million increase for centers and SPOREs," and "\$10 million for the National Clinical Trials Network and the NCI Community Oncology Research Program." With its "\$275 million increase over fiscal 2017 levels," NCI has an enacted 2018 budget of \$5.66 billion. The piece quoted NCI Director Ned Sharpless as saying, "there was about almost a \$40 million increase in taps, benefits, and salaries. ... These are things that the NCI has to experience. There's an increase to our [Small Business Innovation Research program] funding, it's a fixed grade of our external budget."

NCI Establishes National Clinical Trials Network Navigator To Augment Access To Cancer Trial Specimens, Data.

[HemOnc Today](#) (6/29, Mishkin, 98K) reported the NCI recently established the National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN) Navigator which aims "to improve the research community's access to specimens and data collected from cancer treatment trials" by providing researchers with "access to specimens donated by adults who participated in published NCI-sponsored phase 3 cancer trials." The piece included an interview with Grace Mishkin, MPH, public health analyst at NCI, who explained, "This initiative is designed to align with the goals of NCTN by taking a more network-wide centralized approach to making the specimens from these trials more available to the wider research community," adding, "Ultimately, the goal is to have studies come through the navigator process and evaluate biomarkers that can hopefully be used in future clinical trials."

NIDOC Study Indicates Partially-Restored Hearing In Mouse Model Of Inherited Deafness.

The Beckley (WV) Register-Herald (7/1, Holdren, 59K) reports a new study conducted by the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, the University of Iowa, and Iowa City indicates new understandings of "the molecular mechanism in a form of deafness, DFNA27," and "focused on a small-molecule drug – the first to preserve hearing in a mouse model of an inherited form of progressive human deafness." Study co-author Thomas B. Friedman, PhD, chief of the Laboratory of Human Molecular Genetics at the NIDCD, explained, "We were able to partially restore hearing, especially at lower frequencies, and save some sensory hair cells." Andrew J. Griffith, scientific director of the NIDCD, said that by following the genetic indicators, "We find novel and unexpected pathways that can, in cases such as this one, uncover unexpected potential treatment strategies in humans."

Senate Committee Considers Additional \$2 Billion For NIH In 2019.

In a paywalled piece, the Cancer Letter (6/29, Williams, Ong) reported the Senate Committee on Appropriations submitted a fiscal 2019

spending bill last week which would increase NIH funding by \$2 billion, giving it \$39.1 billion. If the measure is enacted, "federally-funded biomedical research would get its fourth consecutive increase," and \$190 million in new money of the total allocation would "trickle down to NCI." The piece added that the House similarly drafted a bill which "proposes a \$1.25 billion increase for NIH, bringing the total to \$38.3 billion."

NIH Recommends Strategies For Older Adults To Avoid Hypothermia In Summer Heat.

The Beckley (WV) Register-Herald (6/29, Holdren, Nelson, 59K) reported, "The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is encouraging older adults to take certain precautions this summer to avoid hyperthermia," recommending that older adults "stay indoors on particularly hot and humid days." The NIH also advises staying hydrated, wearing light-colored and loose-fitting clothes, keeping homes and community centers cool, and visiting air-conditioned locations.

Johns Hopkins Tops List Of Leading NIH Grant Recipients In Baltimore Area.

The Baltimore Business Journal (6/29, Sieron, Subscription Publication,

823K) reported Johns Hopkins University again leads the list of top NIH grant recipients in Greater Baltimore for 2017 "with a total grant value of \$651.8 million last year." The other leading grant recipients include the University of Maryland, Baltimore, the Kennedy Krieger Institute, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and Profectus BioSciences Inc.

Opioid Crisis

Opioid Deaths In Missouri Still On The Rise, But Growth Rate Slowing Down.

The AP (7/1) reports that while opioid related deaths "continue to increase in Missouri, the growth rate is slowing down, according to a new report." The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services "found that there was a 4.7 percent increase in opioid deaths from 2016 to 2017, the Columbia Missourian reported." That rate "is much lower than the 35 percent spike seen from 2015 to 2016."

Ohio Auditor's Report Shows Impact Of Opioids On Medicaid.

The AP (7/1) reports that a state auditor's report "looking at the impact of the opioid crisis on state Medicaid spending shows the number of Ohio Medicaid recipients with an opioid-related diagnosis quadrupling from 2010 to 2016." The report "recently released by Ohio Auditor Dave Yost shows the number of Ohio Medicaid recipients with an opioid-related diagnosis climbed 430 percent between 2010 and 2016."

New Research Shows How Opioids Are Impacting The Workforce In Kentucky.

The AP (6/30) reported that new research shows how opioids are affecting the workforce in Kentucky. The research shows "that the state's high use of painkilling drugs called opioids appears to have reduced the labor pool." In a paper "published by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, economists Dionissi Aliprantis and Mark E. Schweitzer estimated that participation in the labor force by men in their prime working years – ages 24 to 54 – was 4.6 percent less on average in counties with high rates of opioid prescribing than in counties with low prescribing rates."

Georgia Will Require Doctors To Check Database Before Prescribing Opioids.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (6/29, 1.09M) reported that starting July 1, writing a prescription for opioid pain medications in Georgia "will require an extra step...that lawmakers hope may push health care professionals to make better prescribing decisions." A state law that was passed last year "mandates that doctors, dentists and other prescribers check a database to determine what prescriptions patients have recently filled before doling out certain drugs, including opioid painkillers and benzodiazepines such as Xanax."

Arizona County Joins Opioid Manufacturer Lawsuit.

The Arizona Republic (6/30, Wagner, 1.21M) reported that cities and counties across the US "have joined a nationwide lawsuit against corporations that make and distribute opioids, seeking to recoup tax dollars spent fighting America's painkiller-addiction epidemic." Cochise County in Arizona "became the latest to file suit this week, joining at least 1,500 local, state and tribal governments that in the past year have filed federal court complaints against Purdue Pharma LP, the manufacturer of OxyContin, and other companies."

Pennsylvania Law Aims To Protect Newborns Affected By Opioid Addiction.

The Philadelphia Inquirer (6/29, McCullough, 1.07M) reported the Pennsylvania legislature last week passed a bill “that will dramatically change the rules for safeguarding newborns who go home from the hospital with mothers battling addiction.” The overhaul, “effective in October, says any newborn ‘affected’ by the mother’s drug use during pregnancy must be reported by the hospital to the county’s child protective agency, which must ‘immediately’ assess whether protective custody is needed. The agency has to develop a ‘plan of safe care’ for babies who go home.”

Innovative Program At Kentucky Jail Provides In-House Rehab For Inmates.

Fox News (7/1, Kesten, 16.38M) reports that a jail in Kenton County, Kentucky started “an innovative pilot program” back in 2015 that provides in-house rehab for inmates. Today, the program “is so successful that it has a running waitlist,” and “the vast majority of men sign themselves up.” That rehab program, “called Unit 104, houses 70 men,” who “have access to alcoholics and narcotics anonymous meetings, along with a daily schedule of classes to prepare for the G.E.D. or future job interviews.”

Nashville Family Loses Three Loved Ones “To Drugs’ Grip.”

The Tennessean (7/1, Wadhwani, 513K) reports that a family in Nashville has lost three loved ones in drug-related accidents since 2013. Mickey and Tina Baltz’s son died in a car accident in 2013 when former 3 Doors Down bassist – having the opioid oxycodone and the muscle relaxant alprazolam in his system – clipped his car on the interstate. Then in 2016, their daughter’s former boyfriend, Ralph Hardin, 29, “was fatally shot with his own gun in a room at the Red Roof Inn, where – the Baltzes say – he had gone to confront” the Baltz’s daughter’s drug dealer. And earlier this year, their daughter, Heather Baltz, died “of a heart infection doctors believe originated with a contaminated needle used to shoot heroin. She had turned to heroin after running out of pain pills prescribed for gallbladder surgery in 2014.”

Media Collaborates To Share Solutions To Opioid Crisis.

The AP (6/28, De Groot) reported more than 50 print, digital, and broadcast news organizations “are casting a spotlight on the diverse and sometimes out-of-the-ordinary tactics being used to combat the devastating effects of the opioids crisis across Pennsylvania, from the smallest towns to the biggest cities.” One goal of the media collaboration was “to make sure communities in every part of the state are aware of strategies, innovations and community efforts that are helping to alleviate the crisis, or at least show promise.”

Police Using Databases To Crack Down On Opioid Abuse.


Politico (6/29, Tahir, 3.51M) reported, "Bolstered by harsh law-and-order rhetoric from President Donald Trump and his aides, police around the country are using electronic databases to unleash a vast crackdown on opioid abusers and the allegedly crooked doctors who sustain them." The databases are helping "to reduce opioid prescriptions, which have fallen by nearly a third since 2011."

Metrohealth Cuts Opioid Prescriptions By 3 Million.

The Cleveland Plain Dealer (6/29, 1.03M) reported the MetroHealth System "is looking internally to strike the next blow in Ohio's battle against the opioid epidemic." MetroHealth "cut the number of opioid pills prescribed by 3 million, Dr. Akram Boutros, president and CEO of MetroHealth, announced Friday during MetroHealth's annual stakeholders meeting at the Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland." During the annual meeting, Boutros "also told the crowd of 700 about a new initiative to address community trauma and shared updated plans for a new 11-story, 270-bed 'hospital in a park' on its main campus off West 25th Street."

Modern Healthcare (6/29, Johnson, Subscription Publication, 239K) reported the efforts “resulted in 33% fewer opioid prescriptions compared with the previous 18 months.” That includes “a 62% drop in prescriptions for acute pain and a 25% cut in prescriptions for chronic pain.”

NBC Analysis: France Seems To Have Solution To Its Own Opioid Crisis.

NBC Nightly News  Video (7/1, story 9, 3:10, Jackson, 8.26M) reported that France appears to have found a way to “dramatically cut down on the number of people who die from overdosing” on opioids. France, which went through its “own opioid epidemic” in the 1980s and 1990s, began allowing all general practitioners to prescribe buprenorphine in the mid-1990s. In four years, “overdose deaths dropped by 79 percent, and even now, 64 percent of heroin and other opioid substance abusers are on the treatment. Under France’s universal health system, it’s free.” NBC’s Dr. John Torres said buprenorphine “works and saves lives” but isn’t being used in the US because it’s not covered in all states, and doctors who would prescribe it would need “special training.”

Mental Illness

Student Groups On College Campuses May Improve Access To Mental Health Resources, Study Suggests.

The [Huffington Post](#) (6/30, Pajer, 4.32M) reported that some college students “are taking action” to improve access to mental healthcare and “address the culture that makes their peers reluctant to seek help.” The article said some students “have formed clubs and support groups,” while “others educate fellow students about mental health offerings on campus.” A new [study](#) which examines such groups across 12 California schools found that “students’ efforts are working,” and said that the presence of these groups on campus “was found to foster an increase in general knowledge and positive attitudes about mental health,” according to the article.

Healthcare Fraud

Tennessee CEO Indicted In \$2.5 Million Medicare Fraud Case.

The Tennessean (6/29, Kelman, 513K) reported in continuing coverage about a "nationwide health care fraud takedown" that "led to hundreds of arrests in a host of unconnected cases across the nation." The article said "Brenda Montgomery, 70, of Camden, the owner of CCC Medical, Inc., has been charged with conspiracy and bribery, according to a federal indictment that was unsealed Thursday." The Tennessee company "sold knee, wrist and back braces." According to the piece, "Montgomery was identified as [the] leader of the alleged Tennessee bribery conspiracy, which prosecutors say spanned six years before being discovered in January. Federal prosecutors also charged four others: Beau Jones, 50, of Loudon; and Sarah Dacus, 36; Greg Lawson, 42; and Josh Wiley, 35; all of Knoxville."

Dallas Healthcare Center Service Provider Charged In \$2.5 Million Medicare Fraud Scheme.

The Dallas Morning News (6/29, Coello, Reporter, 1.05M) reported that the operator of a Dallas healthcare practice was arrested Thursday and "faces a fraud charge after a record-breaking enforcement action by the Medicare Fraud Strike Force." A federal complaint alleges that Nehaj Rizvi, 29, who operated Life Spring Housecall Physicians, "used a physician's signature stamp to sign certifications and orders for supposedly homebound patients who did not actually need the endorsed

treatments,” according to the article. Life Spring distributed physician orders and certifications “to over 100 home health agencies, allowing them to charge Medicare about \$2.5 million in false billings, according to the complaint.”

Prescription Drug Pricing

Epilepsy Drug’s Price Increase Highlighted.

CNN (6/29, Drash, For, 82.6M) highlighted the case of Trevor Foltz, a teen who lives with infantile spasms, a rare form of epilepsy. The treatment needed for his survival, Acthar (repository corticotropin), increased in price from \$1,600 per dose to “more than \$23,000,” and his family “wrestled with their insurance” to get him treated “at a cost of more than \$125,000.” The family had to fight for another round of treatment more than a year later, meaning another cost of \$125,000. The drug, first invented in the 1930s, cost \$40 per vial back in 2001 and now costs \$39,000 per vial. Ultimately, the steep price hike “resulted in a \$100 million settlement between the government and the drugmaker – as well as revelations that Medicare has spent nearly \$2 billion covering Acthar prescriptions for seniors while the drugmaker paid millions to prescribing doctors.”

Op-Ed: “American Patients First” Plan Neglects Key Elements Necessary To Reduce Drug Costs.

Hagop Kantarjian, MD, health policy fellow at Rice University’s Baker Institute for Public Policy, and Vivian Ho, PhD, Baker Institute chair in health economics and director at the Center for Health and Biosciences, write in an op-ed for The Hill (7/1, 2.71M) that the Trump Administration “should reconsider thoughtfully” the “American Patients First” drug pricing proposal released in May by the Department of Health and Human Services because it “is unlikely” the plan will yield the changes necessary to cut drug costs. According to the authors, a successful plan “must address controlling drug prices through reducing the launch price of new drugs; prohibiting unjustified annual increases of prices, and protecting patients from excessive out-of-pocket expenses.” However, they conclude, the ““American Patients First’ road map ignores all three.”

Editorial: More Policies Requiring Transparency Of PBMs Are Necessary To Combat Drug Prices.

In an editorial, the Columbus (OH) Dispatch (7/1, 399K) argues for increased transparency regarding the role of pharmacy benefit

managers (PBMs) play in drug pricing. The Dispatch says PBMs “were once hailed as an answer to provide needed cost controls through claims management for insurers and payers,” but now “have been revealed as lining their pockets” in their contracts with prescription-drug manufacturers and payers. The editorial applauds the implementation of state contracts requiring transparency about pricing from “two of the nation’s largest PBMs, CVS Caremark and Optum Rx,” which took effect Sunday, and calls for “Medicaid administrators, legislators, office holders and would-be office holders...[to] continue demanding more transparency until we can all be assured that consumers and taxpayers are being treated fairly.”

Op-Ed Criticizes Pharmacy Benefit Managers.

In an op-ed in STAT (6/29, 27K), Scott Knoer, PharmD, the chief pharmacy officer of the Cleveland Clinic, argued that pharmacy benefit managers engage in “financial shenanigans” rather than helping “control costs for payers and lower out-of-pocket costs for plan members.” Knoer contended that PBMs have been able to do this for so long because they “closely guard their complicated processes to avoid scrutiny, and require pharmacies to sign confidential agreements that shield them from visibility.” And, since just three PBMs “control 73 percent of the market,” there are often “abuses” of the system. Knoer detailed five ways in which PBMs “make their unparalleled high profits” – processing of claims, negotiation of rebates, the spread, or “difference between what a pharmacy benefit manager collects from the payer (such as Medicaid) for medications and the amount it pays the pharmacy that dispenses it,” as well as by “forcing patients to use specific pharmacies,” and via remuneration fees.

Op-Ed: State, Federal Laws Should Empower Pharmacists To Help Manage Drug Costs.

In an op-ed in The Hill (6/29, 2.71M), Lucinda L. Maine, PhD, RPh, the Executive Vice President and CEO of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, argued that “pharmacists are in a good position to assist” with the challenges of medication costs, “if state and federal laws would allow.” She pointed out that when “patients elect not to fill a prescription or use only a few doses without finishing the course,” this can increase healthcare costs. She pointed out that “the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy has long advocated for legislative and regulatory changes to professional practice that would help some 200 million Americans better manage their chronic diseases so that more lives could be saved.” Among the changes she suggested is “increasing public access to and coverage for pharmacists’ medication management services.”

Health Care & Insurance Reform

Sen. Collins Says She Will Oppose Supreme Court Pick Who Shows “Hostility” To Roe V. Wade.

The Washington Post (7/1, Long, 15.68M) reports Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) is a “key swing vote on President Trump’s next Supreme Court pick” and she said she will not support “any judge who would overturn Roe v. Wade.” Collins said Sunday on CNN’s State of the Union, “I would not support a nominee who demonstrated hostility to Roe v. Wade.”

The New York Times (7/1, Fandos, Cochrane, 19.33M) reports that Sen. Collins is “among the few remaining voices of centrism in the Republican Party,” and “is one of two Republican senators who have supported abortion rights and, in the past, have shown themselves willing to break with their party.”

The AP (7/1, Yen, Thomas) reports Sen. Collins explained that any judge with such hostility to precedent “would not be acceptable to me because that would indicate an activist agenda.” The AP adds, “Republicans hold a narrow 51-49 majority in the Senate, and it’s even closer because of the absence of ailing Sen. John McCain of Arizona.”

CNN (7/1, Watkins, 82.6M) reports Collins “said when she met with President Donald Trump to discuss the vacancy created by the retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy, she encouraged Trump ‘to broaden his list beyond’ his standing list of 25 potential choices.” She said, “The President really was soliciting my views on the type of

nominee that I was looking for," adding, "I emphasized that I wanted a nominee who would respect precedent, a fundamental tenet of our judicial system." Collins also said, "I want a judge who will apply the law to the facts of the case with fidelity to the Constitution" and "Roe v. Wade is a constitutional right that is well established, and no less an authority than Chief Justice Roberts said that repeatedly at his confirmation hearing."

Bloomberg News (7/1, Niquette, Condon, 4.46M) reports Collins said of the president's process, "I got the feeling that he was still deliberating and had not yet reached a decision, and that this was genuine outreach on his part." She added, "There are people on that list whom I could not support."

The Washington Examiner (7/1, Ayers, 340K) reports Sen. Collins pointed out that Justice Neil Gorsuch would likely not overturn Roe v. Wade. She explained, "I had a very long discussion with Justice Gorsuch in my office and he pointed out to me that he [is] the co-author of a whole book on precedent," adding, "So someone who devotes that much time to writing a book on precedent, I think, understands how important a principle that is in our judicial system."

Also reporting are Reuters (7/1, Dunsmuir), the Washington Times (7/1, Richardson, 460K) and Politico (7/1, Kullgren, 3.51M).

Most Americans Do Not Want To Overturn Roe V. Wade, Poll Says.

Congressional Quarterly (6/29, Raman, Subscription Publication)

reported according to a survey released Friday, only 29 percent of Americans support overturning Roe v. Wade. The poll was conducted before Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy announced he was retiring. Among Republicans, 53 percent want the case overturned, while 81 percent of Democrats and 73 percent of independents do not.

The Hill (6/29, Hellmann, 2.71M) reported, "Sixty-eight percent of women and 65 percent of men said they want the decision to remain the law of the land." The poll was from the Kaiser Family Foundation. The Hill added, "Forty-percent of adults said they are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports access to abortion services, while 30 percent said a candidate who supports abortion restrictions is more likely to get their vote."

Politico (6/29, Diamond, 3.51M) reported the poll found 67 percent of Americans "oppose rolling back constitutional protections for access to abortion." The poll also showed that "67 percent of Democrats oppose the Trump administration's proposal to prohibit federal funding from going to organizations that provide abortion services, while Republicans are nearly split" with 46 percent in support and 48 in opposition.

The Washington Examiner (6/29, Leonard, 340K) also reports.

Trump Judicial Adviser Claims None Of Top Supreme Court Candidates Have A "Clear Position" On Roe V. Wade.

The Washington Examiner (7/1, Williams, 340K) reports Leonard Leo, a "top Trump judicial adviser" and vice president of the Federalist Society,

"none of the reportedly top individuals on the administration's shortlist of candidates to replace retiring Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy have a clear position on whether to overturn" the Roe v. Wade holding. Leo said, "Prospective nominees like Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Barrett, and Raymond Kethledge, and Tom Hardiman are people who have not specifically said they oppose Roe v. Wade, and their writings and their work show that they are very fair." He added, "They look at arguments from both sides all the time and they analyze them very carefully, and when they take a position, they then say these are what the other people have said about this and here's why I don't agree with them."

Advocacy Groups Plan To Spend Millions On Supreme Court Nomination Battle.

NPR (7/1, Overby, 3.55M) reports both sides of the upcoming battle over President Trump's nomination to the Supreme Court are "expected to spend tens of millions of dollars." NPR adds, "the Judicial Crisis Network, which pledged \$10 million to win confirmation for Justice Neil Gorsuch last year, is gearing up again" and so are "plenty of other groups," including "the Koch brothers' Americans for Prosperity, which said it's 'prepared to commit seven figures,' the anti-abortion Susan B. Anthony Fund, Heritage Action and others." The article says, "Some liberal groups say this won't be like other confirmation fights, and they hope to put the future of the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, at the center."

Opinion: Ending Abortion Is The Beginning, Not The End.

Kimberly Ross wrote in the Washington Examiner (6/29, Ross, 340K) that "Abortion has reached a near-sacramental status in the Left's

political religion” and “to encroach upon this holy ground is tantamount to war.” Ross added, “One day, we hope to look back on abortion as we now do slavery and wonder how a nation built on freedom ever permitted and celebrated such a daily horror.” She concluded, “While there may be a potential victory on the horizon, pro-lifers should not trick themselves into believing such a thing means our mission is accomplished.”

Opinion: Antiabortion Groups Are “Laying Low” About Overturning Roe.

Jennifer Rubin wrote in the Washington Post (6/29, 15.68M) in its “Right Turn” blog that “pro-life activists are trying to lay low” about being “on the brink of achieving their dream of a 5-4 court ready to reverse Roe v. Wade.” Rubin criticized their “different tune” and says, “pro-life activists should have the power of their convictions,” noting, “they have spent their lives saying they want to eradicate abortion and that the American people were with them. Now is the time to have that fight.”

Opinion: People Need To Mobilize Against Trump’s Supreme Court Pick.

EJ Dionne Jr. writes in the Washington Post (7/1, Dionne, 15.68M) that Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) was correct when she called the replacement of Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy the “fight of our lives.” Dionne says, “There is no choice but to mobilize.” He adds, “The future of abortion rights is central to the coming battle. But so are civil rights, corporate power and our democratic capacity to correct social injustices.”

Medical Advances Have Contributed To Plunging Abortion Rates.

The New York Times (7/1, A1, Belluck, Hoffman, 19.33M) reports on its front page that "America even without legal abortion would be very different from America before abortion was legal." The article explains, "a full-fledged return to an era of back-alley, coat-hanger abortions seems improbable" because "a burst of scientific innovation has produced more effective, simpler and safer ways to prevent pregnancies and to stop them after conception – advances that have contributed to an abortion rate that has already plunged by half since the 1980s."

Iowa Supreme Court Rules Against 72-Hour Abortion Waiting Period.

The AP (6/29, Pitt) reported the Iowa Supreme Court on Friday ruled 5-2 that a state law requiring a 72-hour waiting period for abortions is unconstitutional, saying that "autonomy and dominion over one's body go to the very heart of what it means to be free." The court determined the restriction was not "narrowly tailored to serve a compelling interest of the state."

Reuters (6/29, Goldberg) reported that there is a "separate challenge pending" over another provision of the law "that outlaws abortion after

a fetal heartbeat is detected.”

Also reporting were The Hill (6/29, Wise, 2.71M) and the Washington Examiner (6/29, King, 340K).

Opinion: Women Must Speak Up To Defend Abortion Rights.

Cindi Leive, former editor in chief of Glamour and Self, wrote in the New York Times (6/30, 19.33M) that as Justice Anthony Kennedy, “whose vote has helped protect abortion rights over his 30 years on the Supreme Court, prepares to retire, we are faced with the very real prospect of a court that would overturn Roe, at a time when states across the country are already restricting abortion rights.” Leive emphasized the importance of women who have had an abortion sharing their stories if they feel comfortable with doing so because “silence...allows menacing myths about abortion to thrive.” Leive said the right to abortion “is under greater threat than it has been in my adult lifetime,” and concluded that “just as women decades ago shared their stories en masse in an effort to change inhumane laws, it’s time for those of us who feel we can share to do so once again.”

New Mexico Democrats Push To Repeal State Abortion Law.

The Albuquerque (NM) Journal (6/29, McKay, 215K) reported that Democratic lawmakers in New Mexico are renewing efforts to repeal a state law that makes it a crime for an abortion provider to end a women's pregnancy, except in narrow circumstances. The push comes "in part because the retirement of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy will allow President Donald Trump to nominate his successor," according to the article.

Supreme Court Ruling Raises Doubts About Illinois Abortion Law.

The Chicago Tribune (7/1, Lourgou, 2.37M) reports the Supreme Court's recent decision to back anti-abortion pregnancy centers is raising doubts about an Illinois law that says "medical providers must inform patients about all available medical options, including abortion and contraception, even if the nurse or physician has faith-based or moral objections."

Some States Taking Action To Support ACA.

The Washington Post (7/1, Goldstein, 15.68M) reports on efforts by state governments to buttress the protections of the Affordable Care Act

against efforts by the federal government to “erode the ACA.” The Post discusses individual mandate requirements passed in New Jersey, Vermont, and DC, as well as state efforts to erect “barriers against rules the Trump administration is writing to promote short-term health plans.” The Post explains how “taken together, the moves mean the nation is starting to revert to the insurance landscape of a decade ago — a hodgepodge that created the political pressures that culminated in the sweeping 2010 law” — where each state had different insurance requirements.

House Vote To Repeal Medical Device Tax May Bolster Vulnerable GOP Lawmaker.

The Hill (7/1, Sullivan, 2.71M) reports that the House is planning to vote this month on legislation that would repeal the Affordable Care Act’s medical device tax, which would “satisfy industry leaders and boost the reelection prospects for the bill’s sponsor,” Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-MN), whose seat is “vulnerable.” Several device makers are based in Paulsen’s district. Repealing the tax is “absolutely popular in this district,” according to Larry Jacobs, a political science professor at the University of Minnesota.

Sen. Durbin Says Trump Seeking Court Nominee Who Will Overturn Roe, Affordable Care Act.

The Washington Times (7/1, Richardson, 460K) reports Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin said President Trump is seeking to nominate a justice to the Supreme Court who will overturn Roe v. Wade and the Affordable Care Act. Durbin said, "The president is looking for someone who will overturn Roe versus Wade. ... But even equally important, he's looking for someone on the court who will make sure that they rule that the Affordable Care Act's protection of those with preexisting conditions is unconstitutional."

Trump Administration Proposes Cuts To ACA Navigators.

The Hill (6/29, Sullivan, 2.71M) reported the Trump Administration has proposed cutting the funding for Affordable Care Act navigators from \$36 million last year to \$10 million this year. The Administration cut the funding from \$63 million to \$36 million in 2017. While a spokeswoman for the Department of Health and Human Services "did not respond to a request for comment," but sources "say that proposal now could be walked back, and it is possible funding could remain the same as last year, but it is unclear where the final number will end up."

Health Insurers Offering ACA Plans In More States, But At Higher Premiums.

The Washington Examiner (7/2, Leonard, 340K) reports that even though health insurers are planning to expand their participation under the Affordable Care Act, the “trend is coming at the expense of higher premiums for certain customers.” The “entrance by insurers into Obamacare is a reversal from years of exits.” The Examiner reports that Oscar Health is expanding into three new states; Centene “has filed in North Carolina and Tennessee;” and Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Molina, and Medica are also adding states.

Obama Told Trump To Take Credit For ACA.

The Hill (6/29, Sullivan, 2.71M) reported former President Barack Obama revealed Thursday that he told President Trump, “Just change the name and claim that you made these wonderful changes and I would be like, ‘You go.’” Obama added, “Because I didn’t have pride of authorship, I just wanted people to have health care.”

Newsweek (6/29, Touchberry, 2.18M) reports that “Obama reiterated Thursday that he did not take up the issue of health care because he wanted to preserve his legacy or receive credit.” Obama said, “The idea that I somehow took on health care just because I thought it was fun or it would somehow burnish my legacy is nuts,” adding, “Because we knew going [into] 2008 that every president since Teddy Roosevelt had failed to do what every other advanced democracy in the world has done.”

Insurance Premiums Set To Sharply Rise Next Year In New York.

Newsday (NY) (7/1, Polsky, 1.52M) reports that insurance premiums in New York state are positioned to "rise sharply in January, as measures to undercut the Affordable Care Act start to take effect." The 14 insurers in the state "are asking for a weighted-average hike of 24 percent, with individual requests ranging from an actual rate cut to up to a 38.6 percent increase." Newsday adds, "The highest rate was requested by Fidelis Care, which has the highest percentage of individual enrollment in 2018, with 41 percent of enrollees with qualified health plans."

Medica To Add Two More States: Missouri, Oklahoma.

The Minneapolis Star Tribune (6/29, Snowbeck, 1.16M) reports health insurer Medica is planning on expanding next year into individual insurance markets in Missouri and Oklahoma. The growth brings the insurer's total to eight states. The Star Tribune points out, "While many health insurers over the past two years have fled red ink in the individual market under the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medica has grown from its base in Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin into Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska."

University Of Mississippi Medical Center To Continue Treating Blue Cross Patients As In-Network During Mediation Process.

The Jackson (MS) Clarion Ledger (6/29, Wolfe, 287K) reported the University of Mississippi Medical Center has agreed to continue treating patients with insurance from Blue Cross & Blue Shield as "in-network" while the two attempt to resolve a contract dispute. Both sides have agreed to meet with a "professional mediator."

Opinion: IRS Should Let Workers Spend Pretax Money On Healthcare.

Regina Herzlinger, a Harvard Business School professor, and Joel Klein, chief policy and strategy officer at Oscar Health, writes the Wall Street Journal (7/1, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) that healthcare is becoming an unsustainable expense as the Milliman Medical Index estimates that insurance for an American family of four was \$28,000 this year. They propose a solution to have the Internal Revenue Service permit workers to buy health insurance using pretax dollars, like employers.

Editorial: Minnesota Helps Bring Insurance Premiums Down, But Faces Funding “Cliff.”

The Minneapolis Star Tribune (6/30, 1.16M) editorialized that insurers in Minnesota are proposing rate decreases on the individual market by 7 to 12 percent. The editorial explained that the state legislature’s “reinsurance” program “played a played a lead role in keeping rates down.” The piece adds, “A different and far more daunting health care challenge looms: a towering state funding cliff that could weaken Minnesota’s health-care-driven economy and undermine coverage for 982,000 Minnesotans relying on public programs.”

Op-Ed: Most Physicians Unaware Of Ways They Can Reduce Healthcare Costs For Patients.

Hussain Lalani, resident physician in Dallas, Texas, writes in a column for the Dallas Morning News (6/29, 1.05M) that as one of more than 30,000 new physicians beginning medical residency July 1, he is “concerned that we will contribute to the \$750 billion epidemic of excessive health care spending...and risk financially hurting our patients if we do not know the cost of what we prescribe.” Lalani explained, “Most patients want their doctors to talk about costs of care with them. ... Yet, most doctors don’t know the specific costs of what they prescribe.” He noted that often, there are “cheaper, equally effective alternatives” physicians can use to minimize healthcare costs.

Human Services News

HHS Provides Maine Group With \$200K Grant For Health Work.

The AP (7/1) reports that the Department of Health and Human Services has provided a \$200,000 grant to help the Aroostook County, Maine Action Program "connect more residents with health services." Sens. Angus King (I-ME) and Susan Collins (R-ME) "say the action program plays an important role in linking residents of far northern Maine to services."

July 1 Marks Change In Arizona Child Welfare Laws.

The Arizona Republic (7/1, 1.21M) reports that July 1 marked a change

in Arizona's child-welfare proceedings. As of that date, "except in emergency situations, child welfare workers will no longer be able to remove a child from her home to protect against abuse or neglect without first getting a court's permission." While critics hope the change will end what they refer to as the "warrantless seizures" of children, "the experience of other states, and the expectations of the lawmakers who championed the legislation, suggests it will have a more subtle effect on the number of child removals."

District Of Columbia Extends Deadline For Daycare Workers To Meet New Education Requirements.

The Washington Post (6/29, Stein, 15.68M) reported that Washington, DC's government has extended a deadline for the city's "daycare employees to meet stricter education requirements after workers in the field argued that the new rules were unrealistic to complete." Two years ago, the city enacted some of the "most advanced education requirements for childcare workers" in the US, but faced "a backlash, with critics arguing that childcare workers are often paid minimum wage and there is little incentive for them to obtain higher degrees." On June 29, the city announced it would provide "employees an additional one to four years to complete certification or degree requirements."

The AP (6/30) reported that "lead teachers in child care centers now have until December 2023 instead of 2020 to earn an associate's degree," while "requirements for assistant teachers, home caregivers and associate home caregivers were pushed back from 2018 to 2019."

Ohio Hasn't Used \$5M Designated For At-Risk Youth In 2018.

The AP (7/1) reports that so far, Ohio has not spent any of the \$5 million it has designated in 2018 "for services for troubled youth on the cusp of being removed from their homes or at risk of entering the justice or foster-care systems." Money from the so-called "crisis stabilization fund" was earmarked "to help pay for support groups, child care, transportation and other expenses," and "county Family and Children First councils were given the task of making local plans to administer the funds." Child welfare advocates argue that "stipulations attached to the federally funded program have caused roadblocks."

Maine Governor Vetoes Bills To Increase Reimbursement Rates For Direct Care Workers.

The Portland (ME) Press Herald (6/29, Pols, 157K) reported that on the evening of June 29, Gov. Paul LePage (R-ME) vetoed two measures that would have boosted "reimbursement rates for the agencies that hire direct care workers who provide key support for adults with intellectual disabilities, as well as those who care for the elderly in nursing homes." Last week, the Legislature unanimously passed a measure affecting workers who care for "intellectually disabled adults," and supporters hope they will be able to gather "the two-thirds majority necessary to

override the governor's veto when lawmakers return on July 9." The current veto, however, means pay rates reverted to 2017 levels as of July 1, and workers were set to "face an immediate 12 percent pay cut," according to Maine Association for Community Service Providers Executive Director Lydia Dawson, to a pay level of \$9.17 per hour, less than the minimum wage.

Food & Import Safety

Wish-Bone Recalls Salad Dressing For Possible Allergens.

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (7/1, 252K) reports, "Pinnacle Foods Inc. is recalling 7,768 cases of Wish-Bone House Italian salad dressing distributed nationwide after learning from a customer that some bottles were mislabeled," according to the FDA. The voluntary recall pertains to "15-ounce bottles which may not list milk or egg, potential allergens, as ingredients," and impacts products with a "Best If Used By" date of Jan. 13, 2019.

The [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (7/1, Krueger, 521K) reports,

"According to the company, 7,768 cases of the recalled product was distributed."

Nutrition & Obesity

Beverage Industry Scores "Defining Victory" In Banning Soda Taxes In California.

The Washington Post (6/30, Dewey, 15.68M) reported that the beverage industry "scored a defining victory" in its battle against soda taxes last week when California lawmakers voted to bar future local taxes on sugary drinks. According to the Post, "under the fast-moving ban introduced June 23 and signed into law five days later, no new food or beverage taxes can be passed in the state until 2031 at the earliest." The article said that the law "represents a significant, if long-anticipated, shift among the nation's soda makers, who have previously fought taxes, city by city, and expended millions of dollars in the process."

Fortune (6/29, Mukherjee, 3.91M) examined how such a measure

seems unlikely in a state known for progressive policies and attributed to passing of the legislation to a “successful, no-holds-barred campaign by the beverage industry and its supporters to nix even the possibility of local soda taxes in exchange for standing down on a controversial tax-related ballot measure.”

In commentary published by The Hill (7/1, 2.71M), Larry Cohen, the executive director of the nonprofit Prevention Institute, maintains that the “new law banning soda taxes in California is a setback.” But when teenage health advocates from Stockton “urged lawmakers to stand with communities like theirs and put people’s health over corporate profits,” the “other side was conspicuously quiet” so, we “won’t give up on reigning in the soda industry.”

Also reporting were Kaiser Health News (6/29, Young) and U.S. News & World Report (6/29, Lardieri, 1.97M).

Medicare

CMS To Test Medicare Advantage Plans As APMs.

Modern Healthcare (6/29, Dickson, Subscription Publication, 239K) reported the CMS "wants to launch an experiment that allows doctors in Medicare Advantage plans to qualify as participating in an alternative pay model." Clinicians in Medicare Advantage plans "have urged the CMS to consider those plans as APMs since some are offering risk-based contracts."

Medicaid &CHIP

Sununu Signs Reauthorized Medicaid Expansion Bill.

The AP (6/29) reports Republican Gov. Chris Sununu "has signed a bill to continue New Hampshire's expanded Medicaid program for another five years." The current program "uses Medicaid funds to purchase private health plans for about 50,000 low-income residents. It would have expired this year if lawmakers didn't reauthorize it." The bill "also changes its structure to a more cost-effective managed care model."

The New Hampshire Union Leader (6/29, 122K) quoted Sununu saying, "This is probably the biggest single piece of landmark legislation I have been involved with as governor." The Nashua (NH) Telegraph (6/30, 44K) reported that the law "still needs federal approval for some of the waivers it is seeking, such as for the work requirement for able-bodied, childless adults."

Maine Governor Vetoes Medicaid Expansion Funding.

The Portland (ME) Press Herald (6/29, 157K) reported Maine Gov. Paul LePage "vetoed a \$60 million Medicaid expansion funding bill Friday, an expected move that sets up a veto override vote by lawmakers when they return on July 9." LePage "said in a statement Friday evening that he vetoed the bill, passed by the Legislature last week, because lawmakers acted in a fiscally irresponsible manner."

The AP (7/1, Villeneuve) reported Maine "is the only state whose voters have approved expanding Medicaid to low-income residents, but expansion originally set for Monday is in limbo as a legal battle between the fiscally conservative governor and advocates continues."

Maine's Medicaid Program To Cover Chiropractic Exams.

The AP (6/30) reports Maine's Medicaid program "will start covering chiropractic exams under a new law," which is expected to require "about \$67,000 from Maine's general fund and \$122,000 in federal funds."

Idaho GOP Committee Passes Resolution Opposing Medicaid Expansion Initiative.

The Idaho Press Tribune (6/29) reported the Idaho Republican Party's resolutions committee "approved a resolution this morning opposing the Medicaid expansion ballot initiative, in one of the first resolutions to gain support during the 2018 GOP convention, reports Bryan Clark of the Idaho Falls Post Register." The resolution, "drafted and submitted by the Bonneville County Central Committee, passed on an overwhelming voice vote in the committee, though there was a small group of dissenters."

The AP (6/29, Kruesi) reported the resolution – which "still needs to win approval from delegates during Saturday's general session – warns 'the current Medicaid program is already cannibalizing dollars for schools and roads by growing at a faster rate than other major programs and expansion will further erode support for other critical spending needs.'"

Iowa's New Private Medicaid Company Has "Troubled Past."

The Des Moines (IA) Register (7/1, Clayworth, 292K) reports that an investigation shows that "the corporation selected to help manage Iowa's controversial privatized Medicaid system has faced serious charges of mismanagement resulting in at least \$23.6 million in penalties in more than a dozen states." Iowa Total Care, a subsidiary of Centene, "was awarded a state Medicaid contract in May by the Iowa Department of Human Services despite scoring nearly 14 points lower on its evaluation than when it had applied and was rejected in 2015, public records show." But with "only two companies bidding for the work, Iowa Total Care won a spot managing Iowa's annual \$4.8 billion Medicaid program."

Arkansas Suspends Medicaid Payments To Missouri Nonprofit After Arrest.

The AP (6/30) reports authorities in Arkansas "have suspended Medicaid payments to a Missouri nonprofit after a former executive with the agency was arrested as part of a scheme to improperly bill almost \$2.3 million in claims for mental health services." Citing the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, the AP reports that the suspension Friday of Medicaid payments "comes a day after Robin Raveendran, formerly executive vice president for Preferred Family Healthcare, was arrested on two counts of Medicaid fraud."

Ohio Medicaid Execs Criticized For Defending Pharmacy Middlemen.

The Columbus (OH) Dispatch (7/1, 399K) reports that criticism “rained down” on Ohio Medicaid executives during a legislative hearing last week as they “reported on findings by a consultant who delved into practices of pharmacy benefit managers, which play the role of middlemen between Medicaid’s managed care outfits and Ohio pharmacies.”

Iowa Hospital Association Says State Has No Data To Support Medicaid Savings Claim.

The Cedar Rapids (IA) Gazette (7/1, Ramm, 146K) reports the Iowa Hospital Association said Iowa Medicaid Enterprises Director Michael Randol has no data to back up his claim that the state’s managed-care model is saving money. The IHA says the state is saving money “because the Medicaid insurance companies are not adequately reimbursing health care providers for their services,” according to the article.

West Virginia Medicaid Waiver Expands Options For Substance Abuse Treatment.


The Exponent Telegram (WV) (7/1, Snoderly) reports that the second phase of a Medicaid waiver in West Virginia has been “rolled out” which will focus “more on intensive services for individuals with substance use disorders, according to Bureau of Medical Services Commissioner Cindy Beane.” The waiver allows the state to sidestep the Institutions for Mental Diseases Medicaid exclusion that “prohibits the use of federal funds for care provided to patients in mental health facilities with more than 16 beds.” West Virginia was “awarded the waiver in October 2017, making it the fifth state to receive the approval.”

Article Examines Why Tennessee Has Not Expanded Medicaid.

The Tennessean (6/29, Allison, 513K) featured an article that examined why the state has not been among those to expand Medicaid. The piece highlighted a way to cover Tennessee’s 10% share of Medicaid expansion cost, and how it could lower insurance premiums.

Health & Medical News

Scientists Warn On Increased Mortality Risk From Prolonged Sitting.

NBC Nightly News  Video (6/29, story 12, 0:20, Holt, 6.8M) reported American Cancer Society scientists warn that sitting for at least six hours a day can “lead to a nearly 20 percent higher risk of death, compared with people who sat for just three hours.” They said, “Spending all that time sitting was linked to 14 diseases.”

People Fail To Properly Wash Hands While Cooking 97 Percent Of The Time, Study Finds.

USA Today (6/29, Molina, 11.4M) reported, “Ahead of Fourth of July grilling, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is offering a reminder to wash our hands” properly.

TIME (6/30, Ducharme, 19.27M) reported, “People fail to properly wash

their hands while cooking 97% of the time, potentially opening them up to food-borne illnesses such as salmonella, norovirus and E. coli,” research indicated. The findings came from a US Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service study.

US Evacuates More Americans From China Following Mystery Illness Complaints.

The Wall Street Journal (7/1, Chen, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reports that at least nine Americans have been medically evacuated from the Chinese city of Guangzhou following complaints of abnormal aural sensations similar to those experienced by US diplomats in Cuba last year. To date, only one American in China has been confirmed as having symptoms and clinical findings consistent with those experienced by U.S. diplomats in Cuba, according to the Journal. However, US embassy staff were told in June that the evacuations of the Americans were not all connected to the mysterious symptoms.

The New York Times (6/30, Myers, 19.33M) said the State Department “evacuated at least 11 Americans from China” after abnormal sounds or sensations were reported by government employees at the US Consulate in Guangzhou.

Most People Apply Too Little Sunscreen.

The Wall Street Journal (6/29, McGinty, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reported that many people do not apply enough sunscreen, and dermatologists sometimes have difficulty explaining how much should be used. Sandy Walsh, a spokeswoman for the FDA, said, "The amount of sunscreen applied for each consumer will be based on their specific attributes including body size, the amount of body hair and sensitivity to the sun." The article also pointed out that a study published earlier this year in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology indicated that using sunscreens that have an SPF that is higher than 50 is beneficial.

Being Married May Reduce Risk Of Heart Disease, Cardiovascular Death, Review Suggests.

The New York Times (6/29, Bakalar, 19.33M) reported that a review suggests "being married may reduce the risk of heart disease and cardiovascular death." The findings were published in the BMJ.

Researchers Developing Artificial Ovary To Help Young Cancer Patients Preserve Fertility.

On its website, [CNN](#) (7/1, Scutti, 82.6M) reports a group of Danish researchers developing an artificial ovary “have engineered a ‘scaffold’ on which early-stage cells can develop into functional ovarian follicles,” which could help younger cancer patients preserve their “fertility from the impact of cancer treatments, experts say.” Researchers will present the study Monday at the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology annual meeting in Barcelona, Spain.

Immunotherapy “Revolution” Is “Greatest Hope Yet” For Beating Cancer.

The [Telegraph \(UK\)](#) (7/2, Vonderheide, 976K) reports that new cancer treatments “that harness the patient’s immune system mark the ‘end of the beginning’ of the fight against cancer.” The story of immunotherapy drugs “has radically altered how we treat some of the most common and deadly cancers – and our work applying those approaches to tackle even more of them.”

FDA Approves First Drug To Reduce Excessive Sweating.

The [AP](#) (6/29, Johnson) reported that on June 29, the Food and Drug

Administration “approved the first drug developed specifically to reduce excessive sweating,” Qbrexza (glycopyrronium), manufactured by Dermira. The drug will be “inside a cloth wiped over the skin daily to block sweat glands from activating.” The drug will start being available in October.

Reuters (6/29, Mishra) reported, “Currently, Allergan’s (AGN.N) Botox injection is used to treat” excessive sweating, and “other treatments include antiperspirants and costlier alternatives such as laser therapy, as well as localized surgery like liposuction to remove sweat glands.” Cowen analysts have estimated the drug could have “sales of \$250 million to \$300 million by 2023.”

Newsweek (6/29, Spear, 2.18M) reported that “in one study, 53 percent of patients said Qbrexza reduced sweat production by roughly half, versus 28 percent in a comparison group using a non-medicated cloth, the drug company reported.”

Also covering the story were Forbes (6/30, Lee, 10.34M) and TIME (6/30, Ducharme, 19.27M).

CDC Warns Of Shingrix Vaccine Shortage.

CBS News (6/29, 6.78M) reported on its website that the Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention has warned about a shortage of the Shingrix shingles vaccine. On "CBS This Morning" on June 30, Dr. David Agus said, "It's a really potent, excellent vaccine. I got it myself. And this is a vaccine where the old vaccine worked 30, 40 percent of the time. This is 97 percent of the time." He offered advice for people attempting to find the vaccine, adding, "Call ahead to a pharmacy. Make sure they have it. You can get it at a pharmacy, your doctor's office."

The Philadelphia Inquirer (6/29, Schaefer, 1.07M) reported on the high demand for the Shingrix vaccine, pointing out that "a quick check of some pharmacies in the Philadelphia region found the vaccine was still available, but not at all locations." The Inquirer reported that Shingrix's maker, GlaxoSmithKline, "has recommended that people who need the second of the two-dose series of the vaccine get priority."

Police Investigate Elder Abuse Against Comic Book Creator Stan Lee, 95.

The AP (6/30, Dalton) reported that, after the death last July of Joan, "his wife of 69 years and partner in all things," comic book creator Stan Lee, 95, "has found himself in the middle of a fight over his finances and legacy that has led to lawsuits, a restraining order and a police investigation of elder abuse." The article used Lee's case to make the larger point that "Lee's status as a celebrity in declining mental health and vulnerable to exploitation has many precedents and may become increasingly common as a wave of wealthy baby boomers reaches old age." A restraining order against a memorabilia collector alleged that

the collector “isolated him from associates, friends and relatives, which is considered a form of elder abuse.”

Mississippi Public Agencies Must Now Cover Increased Share Of Worker Pensions.

The AP (6/29, Amy) reported, “Public agencies in Mississippi will have to contribute another \$100 million toward worker pensions beginning July 1, 2019, after a vote by the state Public Employees Retirement System’s board.” Employers will now be required to provide 17.4 percent of a worker’s salary, up from 15.75 percent, while workers will continue to contribute 9% of their own paychecks. The state’s retirement system currently has 61 percent of the assets needed to cover future benefits. approved changes indicate that the state’s retirement plan will be 100 percent funded by 2047, although that remains heavily reliant on the projected rate of investment returns.

Surveys: Financially Independent Millenials Are Happier Than Those With Money Worries.

CNBC (7/1, 4.81M) reports on its website that a decade-long study by the National Endowment for Financial Education found that financially independent millenials tended to be more confident and happier overall.

NEFE Chief Executive Officer Ted Beck said that the path to financial independence begins long before college, urging parents to have regular discussions with their children on financial responsibility. Similarly, a recent survey from T. Rowe Price found that “young adults who discussed money with their parents are more likely to have a budget, more likely to have an emergency fund, more likely to put 10 percent or more of their income toward savings and more likely to have a retirement account.”

Retirees Increasingly Becoming Entrepreneurs, Cites AARP Study.


As part of a series, “Silver Linings,” on the issues of New Hampshire’s aging population, the New Hampshire Union Leader (7/1, Baker, 122K) reports the rising number of retirees starting businesses as entrepreneurs. The article cites Small Business Administration data that the number of people aged 62 and older who are self-employed is “rising” nationwide. It also cites a 2015 AARP survey that “only” 10 percent of New Hampshire residents aged 50 and older plan to retire and never return to work.

Study Reveals Views On Social Media Bias.

The Washington Times (6/29, Sabes, 460K) reported that a new Pew

Research Center poll of about 5,000 people found that 85 percent of Republicans believe social media sites tend to bias what they show, and 72 percent of Americans believe social media sites censor political views. Younger adults tended to trust social medias sites more than older respondents, with 67 percent of those 18 to 29 years of age saying that the websites censor views, while 81 percent of "seniors" believe that they do.

Hospitals Across US Experiencing Shortages Of Beds For Children With Mental Health Illnesses.

NBC Nightly News  Video (6/29, story 8, 4:05, Holt, 6.8M) reported on a "growing crisis" in American hospitals: "there are simply not enough beds to accommodate kids who need to be hospitalized" for mental illnesses. According to NBC News, "the crisis is nationwide, with nearly a 40-percent increase in psychiatric visits to emergency rooms." One hospital in Kansas said it turned away 2,000 children last year alone, NBC added.

Colorado Hospital Sues Patient For Surgery Bill, Highlighting Alleged Price Gouging.

The Denver Post (6/29, Osher, 755K) reported on a patient in Colorado

who underwent spinal-fusion surgery at the nonprofit St. Anthony North Health Campus and was later sued by the hospital for \$229,112.13 for unpaid medical bills. The article said the case highlights “a growing conflict over skyrocketing health care costs pitting employer-based, self-funded insurance plans against hospitals,” and added that “a growing number of employers are refusing to pay the full amount of the hospital bills of their workers due to alleged price gouging by the hospitals.” The piece continued, “As justification, they point to data that consultants have unearthed showing wide disparities in hospital billing.”

Oklahoma Drafts Rules To Regulate Medical Marijuana Following Successful Legalization.

The AP (6/30) reported that Oklahomans voted to legalize medical marijuana Tuesday “via State Question 788, which passed with about 57 percent support in an election with unusually high turnout.” Now, the state health department is circulating draft rules to regulate medical marijuana licenses for patients, caregivers, and businesses in a move to tighten the new legislation that the AP said is “broad.” The proposed rules would ban “dispensaries near schools, indoor smoking in public places and psychoactive gummy bears,” and “lay out guidance for doctors interested in recommending marijuana, patients who want to use it and businesses looking to grow, process or sell it.”

Many Families Still Live With Arsenic, Lead In Everett, Washington.

The AP (6/30) reported that “nearly three decades” after Washington state discovered large amounts of arsenic and lead in properties surrounding a former smelter site in Everett, “about 150 homeowners are still waiting for the contamination to be cleaned up.” So far, about 350 properties have been cleaned up using a \$34 million settlement, but the fund only has enough to remediate 20 more properties in 2019.

Delaware Lawmakers Vote To Ban Powdered Alcohol.

The AP (6/30, Chase) reported that Delaware lawmakers gave final approval to a bill “outlawing the manufacture, sale and use of powdered alcoholic beverages.” Enactment of the legislation would make Delaware the 37th state to ban “powdered substances that form alcoholic drinks when reconstituted with liquid.” According to the AP, “the American Medical Association has called for a nationwide ban on powdered alcohol, which critics say carries the risk of more potent drinks and harmful overconsumption.”

Angelman Syndrome Receives Its Own Medical Code.

The Atlantic (6/29, Yong, 3.08M) reported that Angelman syndrome has been granted its own medical code, Q93.51, under the International Classification of Diseases. The article said the medical standard allows researchers “to interrogate large databases and find out how many patients have a particular disorder, what secondary problems they experience, what treatments they typically receive, how many times they’re admitted to the hospital, and more. Insurers use them to decide what treatments should be reimbursed.”

California Vaccine Skeptic Put On Probation By State Medical Board.

The Los Angeles Times (6/29, Karlamangla, 4.03M) reported that the Medical Board of California has ordered 35 months’ probation for Dr. Bob Sears, “an Orange County pediatrician well-known for being sympathetic to parents opposed to vaccines.” According to the Times, “Sears can keep practicing medicine but will be required to take 40 hours of medical education courses a year, as well as an ethics class, and also be monitored by a fellow doctor.” In addition, he “must notify all hospital and medical facilities where he practices of the order and is not allowed to supervise physician assistants or nurse practitioners.”

Opinion: Antibacterial Debate Must Weigh Risks, Benefits.

Bloomberg View (6/29, 4.46M) opinion columnist Faye Flam wrote about the safety concerns surrounding the antibacterial chemical triclosan, and highlighted recent evidence which showed the chemical can have negative side effects. Flam wrote, "There's only one rational way out of this bind: to think about safety not as a black or white issue, but to consider risk-benefit ratios." Flam said "the FDA did consider both sides of the equation in 2016, when it required companies to phase triclosan out of soaps and body washes, citing safety concerns and lack of evidence for any benefit."

Woman's Facebook Post Says Menthol Shaving Cream Soothes Sunburns.

TODAY (6/29, Murray, 1.19M) reported that in a Facebook post, a woman discusses her "trick to getting rid of sunburn," which is "applying menthol shaving cream on the burn, which the poster said 'takes the heat out' and soothes skin." However, "dermatologists say it's no magic solution for sunburns, although it might provide some relief."

AMA President-Elect Profiled.

The AP (7/1, Severino) profiles Patrice Harris, MD, who “will become the 174th president of the AMA in June 2019, and is now serving as president-elect.” Dr. Harris “was elected to the post earlier this month.” The AP adds, “In her vision for the AMA, Harris said she wants to improve the education of up and coming medical professionals.” The article also points out that Dr. Harris “served on the American Psychiatric Association board and was later named by the APA as a delegate to the AMA.”

AARP Dedicates \$60 Million To Dementia, Alzheimer’s Disease Research Fund.

Health IT Analytics (6/29) reported the AARP’s Brain Health Fund has vowed to “invest \$60 million in the Dementia Discovery Fund (DDF) to accelerate the development of innovative treatments for dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.” The research is considered “vital for dementia treatment as the condition becomes more and more prevalent,” the piece said, adding, “NIH also recently convened a group of leading experts to discuss how to best foster a collaborative research environment and use precision medicine to ultimately discover a cure for these chronic, degenerative conditions.”

Ohio, Washington Officials Confirm West Nile Virus-Carrying Mosquitoes.

Newsweek (6/29, Spear, 2.18M) reported Ohio and Washington health officials “are urging people to protect themselves against mosquitoes after insects in these states tested positive for the West Nile virus.” Data from the Ohio Department of Health showed “mosquitoes near Alexandria, Johnstown and Harrison Township in Ohio had the virus,” while Washington officials “discovered a pool of mosquitos that tested positive for the virus in Benton County.” The article added that the National Institutes of Health says severe cases of West Nile virus in humans can “affect the nervous system, and trigger conditions including meningitis, and inflammation of the brain called encephalitis.”

Michigan’s Detroit Area Becoming A “Hotspot” For Vaccination Waivers, Study Suggests.

The Detroit News (7/1, 710K) reports that according to health researchers, a growing number of “parents choosing not to vaccinate their children for non-medical reasons” has led to the rise of “‘hotspots’ across the country and in Metro Detroit.” The piece says that since 2009, “the number of kindergarten-age children enrolling in school with non-medical waivers has climbed in 12 of 18 states that allow the exemptions, according to a peer-reviewed study published June 12 in the Public Library of Science journal PLOS Medicine.” Cities including “Troy, Warren and Detroit were among the areas in Michigan where more than 400 kindergartners had received the non-medical vaccination exemptions, according to the PLOS report.”

WPost: Stalling Malaria Fight Could Jeopardize Children's Lives.

The Washington Post (7/1, 15.68M) editorial says that while the number of malaria cases and deaths have declined steadily for a decade and a half as "global public-health officials have been at war" with the disease, the "battle shows signs of stalling." In 2016, "the number of malaria cases went up to 215 million, from 210 million the year before," the Post says, adding that malaria "kills more than 445,000 people annually, about 70 percent of them children under 5 years old." The Post adds that the fight against malaria will be won "by action on many fronts. A stall, after so much promise, would be terrible and costly."

Indiana Resident Contracts Rare Flu Strain After Exposure To Pigs At Fair.

The Indianapolis Star (7/1, Fittes, 477K) reports health officials are warning Indiana residents "to take preventative measures this fair season, after an Indiana resident caught the influenza virus following a visit to a county fair." In what is "the first human case of the H3N2 influenza in the Indiana since 2013, and first case reported nationwide this year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention," a resident has been sickened with a flu strain "commonly associated with contact with pigs, the Indiana State Department of Health and Indiana Board of Animal Health said in a statement Friday."

Op-Ed: New Chemotherapy Study Underscores Importance Of Non-Inferiority Trials.

Contributor Dr. Conor Lavelle wrote for [Quartz](#) (6/29, 788K) that a [study](#) published in New England Journal of Medicine assessing the effectiveness of “chemotherapy for a specific, common variant of breast cancer...found that thousands of women may not actually need to undergo the intensive, painful treatment.” Dr. Lavelle considers this “another important victory for something called a ‘non-inferiority trial,’” which “is arguably our most powerful weapon in the war against unnecessary or harmful pharmaceuticals – and it starts with putting people first.”

Loved One’s Cancer Diagnosis Can Spur Others To Seek Preventive Care.

[U.S. News & World Report](#) (6/29, Howley, 1.97M) examined the impact of watching a loved one endure cancer treatment, noting it “can have a hyper-focusing effect for many people.” The article spotlighted the case of one woman who was diagnosed with breast cancer and whose daughter after determining that the family had a history of “known breast-cancer causing mutation” on their BRCA2 genes. The ordeal caused the daughter to undergo genetic testing, finding that she “tested

positive for the same mutation as her mother” and prompting her to undergo a double mastectomy. The piece noted that the National Cancer Institute reports “about 69 percent of women who inherit a harmful BRCA2 mutation will develop breast cancer by the age of 80.”

Congress Passes Firefighter Cancer Registry Act.

The Springfield (MA) Republican (6/29, Flynn, 412K) reported Congress has passed the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act, which “allows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under the Secretary of Health and Human Services to create a voluntary and inclusive national registry that would allow scientists and others to track job-related cancer incidence for both career and volunteer firefighters.” The legislation also “authorizes \$2.5 million for each of the fiscal years 2018 through 2022 to carry out this broader collection of data to help improve measures to protect firefighters.” The piece added that the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in 2010 “began a five-year study of nearly 30,000 firefighters” which found they “have a greater number of cancer diagnoses and cancer-related deaths,” which helped spur the creation of the legislation.

Amazon’s Latest Deal Shows It Plans To Disrupt How Industry Cares For Chronically Ill.

STAT Plus (6/29, Ross, Subscription Publication, 27K) reported that Amazon's acquisition of the home delivery pharmacy PillPack makes clear the company's ambitions to "not only fundamentally change treatment of U.S. patients, it wants a large chunk of the \$370 billion market for selling and distributing their prescription drugs." The PillPack deal "gives Amazon the infrastructure to become a national seller of prescription drugs," noting that "PillPack is already an in-network pharmacy for all the largest pharmacy benefit managers." STAT Plus adds, "To turn the corner in the pharmacy business – and lower costs within its own ranks – Amazon will need to figure out how to improve services for the chronically ill population."

US Judge Rules AbbVie, AndroGel Partner Owe \$448 Million In Antitrust Case.

Reuters (6/29, Raymond) reported that on June 29, US District Judge Harvey Bartle in Philadelphia ruled "that pharmaceutical company AbbVie Inc. used sham litigation to illegally prevent generic versions of testosterone replacement drug AndroGel from getting to market and ordered the drugmaker and its partner to pay \$448 million." The ruling was for an antitrust suit filed in 2014 by the FTC against both AbbVie and partner Besins Healthcare. The FTC had alleged AbbVie and Besins filed "baseless patent infringement lawsuits in 2011 against generic drugmakers Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd and Perrigo Company to delay the launch of their generic versions of AndroGel."

Amazon's PillPack Deal May Provide It With Access To Sensitive Health Data.

The Wall Street Journal (7/1, Stevens, Terlep, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) reports that Amazon's acquisition of PillPack will provide it with information about people's prescriptions, a move into the health and medical records space which the Journal describes as much more detailed than Amazon's previous efforts to track customers' purchases of things such as movies or toiletries. The Journal reports that an Amazon spokeswoman said the company plans to comply with regulations, including HIPAA.

WSJournal: Amazon's PillPack Deal Will Benefit Consumers, Force Competitors To Improve.

The Wall Street Journal (6/29, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) editorialized that Amazon's acquisition of online pharmacy PillPack will enable the company to grow rapidly to compete with drugstore industry giants. The combination will help patients get drugs faster and cheaper and will force competitors to improve service, the Journal adds. The article concludes Amazon's decision to enter the drug delivery industry is welcome, and could benefit consumers in the long run.

Similarly, a Forbes (6/29, 10.34M) column written by Christopher

Walton suggested that Amazon's entry into the industry will likely have an impact on CVS and Walgreens.

Meanwhile, for Bloomberg View (6/29, 4.46M), Faye Flam wrote, "If Amazon's move to disrupt health care is going to make Americans any healthier, the improvement is most likely to take place in the business of getting prescription drugs to patients more reliably."

More Suits Filed Against Florida Drugmaker Accused Of Selling Contaminated Medicines.

The South Florida Sun Sentinel (6/29, Hurtibise, 601K) reported that more suits have been filed against South Florida drugmaker PharmaTech LLC and its principals and distributors. The company is now facing seven suits "on behalf of patients said to have been sickened or killed, including three infants who reportedly died after being given a liquid stool softener made by the company." The company vacated its Davie, FL plant in June 2017 following FDA inspection reports in August 2016 and May 2017 that "identified numerous quality control deficiencies in its manufacturing processes," the Sentinel reported. The latest suit, filed in June in Broward County Circuit Court, identified the victim of an outbreak of water-borne bacteria "as Londyn Simone Manuel, who was born with a congenital heart defect in December 2016, and died before turning 8 months old after being given liquid docusate" made by the company.

District Court Extends Indivior's Order Blocking Launch Of US Generic Addiction Treatment.

Reuters (6/29, Varghese) reported that on June 29, the US Court for the District of New Jersey "extended a restraining order blocking" Mylan NV and Dr. Reddy's from launching a generic version of Indivior's Suboxone (buprenorphine and naloxone) Film, an opioid addiction treatment that generates around 80% of Indivior's revenue. "Indivior said its temporary restraining order (TRO) issued on June 15 had been extended for another 14 days, during which time the U.S. court for the District of New Jersey will consider the application and issue a ruling on the injunction."

FDA Cites Mylan For Morgantown Plant Manufacturing Issues.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (6/29, Sabatini, 507K) reported that on June 28, Mylan announced the FDA cited it in April for manufacturing issues at its Morgantown, WV plant. Among the issues an FDA inspection report cited were "numerous instances of a lack of appropriate oversight by the quality unit," along with problems related to "cleaning procedures used to prevent cross-contamination of drug ingredients." In a statement, Mylan said, "The company has submitted a comprehensive response to the agency and committed to a robust improvement plan."

Report: Nearly All Online Pharmacies Illegal.

Newsweek (7/1, Hugo, 2.18M) reports that “if you buy drugs from an online pharmacy, there’s a good chance that exchange is illegal – or worse.” In a report on darknet opioid sales, the Center for Safe Internet Pharmacies “found that people on both the darknet and surface web sell drugs like opioid painkillers through online ‘pharmacies,’ 97 percent of which operate illegally, according to the FDA.” Many of these online “pharmacies” are actually “drug-dealing websites set up to look like they simply sell prescription pills to those in need, and some claim to offer prescriptions.” CSIP Executive Director Marjorie Clifton “said that some non-opioid-selling pharmacies are legal, if they follow certain rules,” such as having “brick-and-mortar locations,” as well as being “licensed in every state that they sell to.”

Missouri Appeals Court Rejects \$55 Million Verdict Against Johnson & Johnson In Talc Powder Suit.

Reuters (6/29, Bellon) reported that on June 29, a Missouri appeals court “threw out a \$55 million verdict against Johnson & Johnson in a lawsuit by a woman who claimed she developed ovarian cancer after using talc-based products, including J&J’s baby powder.” The appeals court’s decision to dismiss the 2016 verdict cited “a 2017 U.S. Supreme

Court decision that limits where companies can be sued for personal injuries” and that found that “state courts cannot hear claims against companies that are not based in the state or when the alleged injuries did not occur there.” In a statement, J&J “said it was extremely pleased with the court’s decision to recognize that the trial should have never occurred.”

FDA Approves Pulmonx’s Valve For Emphysema.

Reuters (6/29, Mitra) reported that on June 29, the Food and Drug Administration “approved Pulmonx Inc.’s valve to treat” emphysema. The valve works by being “permanently implanted using a catheter in the affected part of a patient’s lung,” then regulating “the airflow to the healthier parts” of the lung. The average patient “may need four valves and depending upon the severity of emphysema, the cost of treatment could go up to \$10,000 per patient.”

Mass Device (6/29, Perriello) reported that the FDA “granted pre-market approval under its breakthrough devices designation,” based upon “a 190-patient study comparing treatment with Zephyr, plus standard medical management and pulmonary rehabilitation, to treatment with standard medical management and rehab only.” The trial benchmark “was at least a 15% improvement in pulmonary function score,” and around “47.7% of patients in the Zephyr arm met that mark, compared with 16.8% of the control arm, according to the FDA.”

NYC Expands Lead Testing Program For Children.

The New York Times (7/1, A18, Ferré-Sadurní, 19.33M) reported that in New York City, "the exact number of children residing in public housing poisoned by lead was never disclosed." This past weekend, however, "the city department of health offered a number," saying that "820 children younger than 6 were found to have elevated levels of lead in their blood between 2012 and 2016."

AM New York (7/1, Cook, Trangle, 591K) reports on its website that on July 1, New York City Mayor Bill De Blasio's Administration announced an expansion to a program to test lead levels in children. The city now will start "environmental investigations for all children younger than 18 who test above a blood lead level (BLL) of 5 micrograms per deciliter," an adjustment from the previous level of "10 micrograms per deciliter." The city health department has already started "investigations for children at NYCHA developments and will implement the new rules for the rest of the city by the end of the year, according to the mayor's office." The news follows the "day after a Daily News report that revealed the city knew of more than 800 children living in NYCHA apartments between 2012 and 2016 who had blood lead levels between 5 and 9 micrograms per deciliter."

The New York Post (7/1, Hicks, 4.46M) reports, "As many as 820 children in the city's housing projects tested for elevated levels of lead, but health officials failed to follow up and inspect their apartments, City Hall admitted Saturday." Despite the CDC in 2012 implementing a

recommendation “that authorities take action if children test positive for having more than 5 micrograms of the compound in their blood,” New York City “health officials continued to use the CDC’s old 10-microgram standard, meaning these 820 positive tests would not have been forwarded by city health officials to the New York City Housing Authority and would not have triggered a home inspection – potentially allowing the exposure to continue.”

Learning To Play Piano May Help Children Build Up Language Skills, Study Indicates.

TIME (7/1, Ducharme, 19.27M) reported research indicates learning to play the piano may help children “build up their language skills.” As youngsters’ “ears become trained to distinguish between different pitches and tones at the piano...they also seem to get better at parsing subtle differences between spoken words, a key element of language acquisition,” the study revealed. The findings were published online in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Tech Company CEO: Children Need To Be Guided Through Technology Thoughtfully.

In an opinion piece in USA Today (6/30, Ingram-Cauchy, Contributor,

11.4M), Pete Ingram-Cauchy, "CEO of iD Tech Camps, a STEM education company based in" California, wrote that even though "technology has its downsides...it holds untold promise and it is not going away." Children "just need to be guided through it thoughtfully and led to a place of creativity and passion."

Factors Behind Lagging Mainstream Adoption Of Telemedicine Examined.

CNBC (6/30, Farr, 4.81M) examined factors behind lagging mainstream adoption of telemedicine. The primary and "most important" factor "is that many U.S. consumers are still not aware they have the option to chat with their doctor over the phone or via video." In addition, patients who have "heard of telemedicine apps often fear the expense, especially if it's unclear whether they can use their health insurance." What's more, clinicians "who are willing to work with app makers are inexperienced, or low-quality." Many clinicians "are afraid of liability, as it's possible to miss something during a remote visit," and "reimbursement questions" remain .

Drivers For Car Services, Ride-Hailing Apps In New York Now Able To Get Coverage For Vision Care.

The AP (6/29, Matthews) reported that starting July 1 in New York, “drivers for car services and ride-hailing apps like Uber and Lyft” will “now be able to get coverage for vision care as well as phone or video appointments with doctors, industry representatives announced.” This “coverage for an estimated 43,000 drivers statewide will be paid for by the Black Car Fund, a workers’ compensation fund for car-service drivers that is funded by a 2.5 percent surcharge on each ride.”

Scientists’ Discovery Is “First Step” To Packaging Insulin In Pill.

The Boston Globe (7/2, 945K) reports that two developments – “a newly released study and the publication of new clinical trial data” – describe “advances toward an alternative approach” to diabetes management: “the delivery of blood-sugar-regulating hormones in a pill, long regarded as the ‘holy grail’ of diabetes treatment.” The study, “by University of California Santa Barbara and Harvard University scientists, demonstrated a technical breakthrough in the oral delivery of insulin, a hormone produced in the pancreas that allows the body to absorb and store sugar from the blood.” This discovery “is the first step in a longer process to package insulin in a pill that could take many years.” Enclosing insulin “in a particular ionic liquid, aptly named CAGE, has the dual benefit of protecting the hormone from stomach acid and promoting its absorption through layers of mucous and the intestinal wall. That could help it reach the liver.” One promising note, “experts say, is that the two ingredients of CAGE, choline and geranic acid, are generally regarded as safe by the Food and Drug Administration.”

Roche Encouraged By Tecentriq Trial Results.

Reuters (7/2) reports Swiss drugmaker Roche "said on Monday that a trial showed its immunotherapy Tecentriq plus the chemotherapy Abraxane significantly reduced the risk of disease worsening or death in people with metastatic triple negative breast cancer." The company, "citing its IMpassion130 study, said it also recorded an encouraging overall survival benefit for the PD-L1 positive population, whose tumors express a protein that help them evade immune system detection, at interim analysis."

Angela Garbes' New Book "Like A Mother" Discussed.

ABC's Good Morning America (7/2, Kindelan, 4.2M) discusses mother of two and author Angela Garbes' new book, "Like a Mother: A Feminist Journey Through the Science and Culture of Pregnancy," which GMA says "gives women straight talk on pregnancy, their bodies and life after giving birth." One topic the book covers is "lack of post-delivery care for new moms." Garbes' interest in post-delivery care for moms "stemmed from hip pain she suffered after giving birth." The piece adds that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists "recently launched an initiative to address the issue of postpartum care for new moms called 'the fourth trimester.'"

Hawaii Bans Sale Of Sunscreens Containing Oxybenzone, Octinoxate.

NPR (7/2, Fulton, 3.55M) reports Hawaii's governor David Ige is expected "to sign the world's first ban on the sale of sunscreens containing the chemicals oxybenzone and octinoxate this week." The state is "banning the products because of concerns they may be harming one of the state's biggest attractions – coral reefs." Both chemicals "have had the Food and Drug Administration's OK for decades, but in recent years, some environmental research has suggested octinoxate can contribute to coral bleaching and that oxybenzone exposure leads to the death of baby coral."

Global Health

Britain's NHS To Reduce "Unnecessary Or Risky Procedures."

The AP (6/30) reported that Britain's NHS has proposed cutting back on operations including breast reductions and anti-snoring treatments as part of plans to save money and reduce "unnecessary or risky procedures." NHS medical director Stephen Powis said the agency "could save an estimated 200 million pounds (\$264 million) a year by tightening the criteria for treatments where the risks could outweigh the benefits." According to the AP, "the list of 17 treatments under consideration to be halted or reduced includes tonsil removals and procedures for carpal tunnel, hemorrhoids and varicose veins."

UK's NHS Making Plans To Ensure Ample Medical Supplies After Brexit.

The AP (7/1) reports that Britain's National Health Service "is making plans to ensure that medical supplies will be available if Britain leaves the European Union without a trade deal." NHS chief Simon Stevens said Sunday there is "significant planning" underway to make sure the NHS "can cope with a no-deal Brexit without a disruption in services." Stevens explained that Britain's health agency and other governmental departments are working to make sure supplies of medicine and medical equipment can still be accessed under various Brexit scenarios, according to the AP.

Reuters (7/1) reports that Stevens said the NHS is "working with pharmaceutical companies to make sure there will be no breakdown in supply if there is no deal with the EU."

Irish Cancer Patients Received Faulty Tests From US-Based Labs.

The [CBS Evening News 📺 Video](#) (6/29, story 7, 2:45, Glor, 5.29M) reported American laboratories Quest Diagnostics and Clinical Pathology Laboratories (CPL) “are coming under scrutiny because of faulty cancer tests in Ireland,” where hundreds of women “were told they tested negative, only to find out years later they had cancer all along.” Correspondent Roxana Saberi reported that Quest and CPL along with “an Irish lab processed smear tests for Ireland’s health service. A government review four years ago found that the labs mistakenly cleared more than 200 women...who were later diagnosed with cervical cancer.” Since that time, “18 of those women have died. But most of the women affected were never told until one of them...discovered a page from that review in her medical file.”

Global Fund Combating AIDS, TB, Malaria Cancels Funding For North Korean Public Health Efforts.

[Science Magazine](#) (6/29, Stone, 441K) reported The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria announced that effective June 30, it will revoke its grants to North Korea, a revelation which “leaves the isolated nation with about 1 year to line up a new source of medicines and diagnostics to combat a deepening [tuberculosis] crisis.” Medical researchers say they have “not gotten any clarity on why they are doing

this,” adding that the fund’s financial contributions of more than \$100 million to TB and malaria control in the country “has been the biggest outside investment ever in public health in North Korea.”

Novartis, Gilead CAR-T Therapies Both Gain European Panel Recommendation.

Reuters (6/29, Miller) reported that rival cancer therapies from Gilead Sciences and Novartis both won recommendations from the European Medicines Agency’s Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use. The committee recommended both Gilead’s Yescarta (axicabtagene ciloleucel) and Novartis’ Kymriah (tisagenlecleucel) for diffuse large B cell lymphoma, while it also recommended Yescarta for primary mediastinal B cell lymphoma and Kymriah for B cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Both of the CAR-T therapies are single-use treatments “in which immune cells are removed from patients, genetically engineered in the laboratory using disabled virus to target their blood cancers, and then re-infused.” Both drugs range in price in the US from between \$373,000 and \$475,000, depending on the cancer being treated.

Fierce Pharma (6/29, Sagonowsky) reported that both treatments received US approval several months ago. One reason for the high cost of the drugs “is their unique, patient-specific manufacturing,” as “CAR-T drugs are made of re-engineered T cells collected from each patient, which are then infused back into the patient to attack cancer.” Gilead recently said it will build “a CAR-T manufacturing plant at the Amsterdam airport in an effort to cut down on logistics and manufacturing turnaround time.”

AstraZeneca Receives “Speedy Approvals” For Cancer Drugs In Japan.

Reuters (7/2) reports AstraZeneca has won “rapid regulatory approval for new uses of two of its important cancer drugs in Japan, less than six months after the first global approvals in Western markets.” The decisions by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare “reflect an increased urgency by officials in the country to access modern medicines, after many years of slow adoption.”

Ghana Reports H5 Bird Flu Outbreaks.

Reuters (6/29, Trompiz) reported that Ghana announced two outbreaks of “highly pathogenic H5 bird flu” on farms in the country. According to Reuters, “one of the outbreaks killed 5,431 birds out of an 11,000-strong flock on a farm in Boankra in the Ashanti region, while the other killed 5,935 out of 13,188 birds on a farm in Nkawkaw in the Eastern region.”

Researchers Warn That Gay Hate Climate In Indonesia Is Fueling HIV Epidemic.

The AP (7/2, Wright) reports on an “out-of-control but little-acknowledged epidemic of HIV among gay men in Indonesia that researchers say is being fueled by a gay hate climate whipped up by the country’s conservative political and religious leaders.” A Human Rights Watch report released Monday explained that “highly publicized police raids targeting gay men and a vicious outpouring of anti-LGBT rhetoric from officials and other influential figures since early 2016 have caused significant disruption to HIV awareness and testing programs.”

TIME (7/2, Haynes, 19.27M) reports Kyle Knight, an LGBT rights researcher at Human Rights Watch and author of the report, said, “What’s shifted in the last two years is that the government and police have made it abundantly clear that it’s perfectly okay to hate LGBT people and to act on it.” He cautioned, “Unless certain steps are taken to dial back on these raids, to create safe spaces for those to gather to gain information, to get safety, sense of dignity, community and privacy, this will spin out of control not just from a human rights perspective, but also from a public health perspective.” TIME adds, “Combined with the crackdown and heightened discrimination against LGBT people, the impending health crisis threatens to force the community into total retreat.”

India Celebrates End Of Nipah Virus Outbreak With Music Video.

NPR (7/1, Thiagarajan, 3.55M) reports India's Nipah virus outbreak "in May had all ingredients of an-edge-of-the-seat medical thriller" as the nation battled "one of the most lethal pathogens of our times." The article says, "Three weeks after Nipah had been identified as a cause of the outbreak, on June 10, Kerala's Minister for Health, K.K. Shylaja, declared that the state was Nipah-free. Of the 19 cases, two patients have recovered." After the outbreak was declared over, "a group of musicians and filmmakers decided to make a video to celebrate."

WTO Upholds Australia's Plain-Packaging Law.

Fortune (6/29, Meyer, 3.91M) reported in continuing coverage that the WTO last week ruled in favor of Australia's plain-packaging laws and said the country "is free to continue selling cigarettes in drab, olive-colored packaging without no branding beyond the manufacturer's name in small print, and with large and graphic health warnings dominating the packaging." The article said the WTO's decision "will likely have major ramifications around the world."

Bloomberg View (7/1, 4.46M) columnist David Fickling says "the world's ugliest cigarette packets aren't going away." Fickling says claims that Australian plain packaging does not make much of a difference do not "stand up to a lot of scrutiny: Studies supporting that claim have either been based on non-public data that can't be checked, or commissioned

by the industry, or both, according to a 2016 analysis by Australia's Department of Health."

Russians Protest Pension Age Hike.

Reuters (7/1) reports that although "thousands of Russians protested on Sunday over a government decision to increase the retirement age...there were no demonstrations in the cities hosting the World Cup because of security restrictions in force during the tournament." Published photos of the protest featured individuals with signs saying "Raise the pension, not the pension age!" and "Hands off our pensions!" A "close ally of President Vladimir Putin" last month stated "that the government wanted to raise the retirement age for men by five years, to 65 from 60, and for women by eight years, to 63 from 55," which supposedly is "to ease intense pressure on state coffers," per Reuters, while "critics say the retirement age in many regions is higher than life expectancy." Some polls reported Putin's approval rating dropped from 75 to 69 percent following the announcement.


Son Debates Assisted Dying Amid Mother's Alzheimer's Diagnosis.

Bernard Lyall writes in The Guardian (UK) (7/1, 4.03M) about his mother's Alzheimer's diagnosis, saying that "she who has lived entirely

by her wits has now lost them" to a word carrying "the ring of finality." Lyall says despite several emotional "blows," his mother retained "her instinct to put on a brave face, try to ignore it and muddle through regardless," which "was the way her generation coped," but has proved "disastrous" for her carers, because "whenever we hoped she'd understand some new limitation, or accept a new level of care, we had to choose between complicity in a face-saving but ultimately pointless pretence and provoking unreasoning anger." While "Kath had argued for the right to die, has a living will, and would have been horrified to see herself like this," now Lyall says that as "the power to let her go has fallen to me, it's not so simple." Lyall wonders whether someone's "younger self" should "be allowed to make such decisions about the person they are now."

National News

Trump Predicts Quick Supreme Court Confirmation "If I Pick The Right Person."

During an interview Sunday with [Fox News' Sunday Morning Futures](#)  [Video](#) (7/1, Bartiromo, 1.79M), the President vowed he would "pick somebody who is outstanding" to replace retiring Supreme Court Justice

Anthony Kennedy. He also predicted that while Democrats would work to resist his choice, "I think it will go quickly if I pick the right person." The Washington Examiner (7/1, Chaitin, 340K) reports the President also predicted a "big week" ahead, declaring in a tweet Sunday he will be focused on deciding who he will nominate to succeed Kennedy.

Media reports, however, cast the President as ready for a fight with Democrats over his pick. On ABC World News Tonight 📺 Video (7/1, story 4, 2:50, Llamas, 14.63M), for example, Tara Palmeri said Trump is "preparing for battle tonight over his highly anticipated Supreme Court pick." Trump: "It's probably going to be vicious because the other side, all they can do obstruct and resist. You know, their whole thing is resist." NBC Nightly News 📺 Video (7/1, story 6, 2:00, Jackson, 8.26M) reported, "A vicious but fast fight. That's what President Trump says he expects once he announces the second Supreme Court nominee of his Administration" next week under "his self-imposed deadline." Kelly O'Donnell said the President, who is "on the trail this week, is already touting the influence of his high court selection to rally his own base."

The CBS Weekend News 📺 Video (7/1, story 4, 2:40, Quijano, 5.32M) reported that while Trump "voiced confidence that his yet-to-be-announced Supreme Court nominee will be confirmed soon," his choice "needs the backing of nearly all Senate Republicans." According to the Wall Street Journal (7/1, Armour, Nicholas, Subscription Publication, 6.13M), White House officials are also meeting with Democrats, including the three who voted last year for Justice Neil Gorsuch: Sens. Joe Manchin, Heidi Heitkamp and Joe Donnelly.

USA Today (7/1, Estepa, 11.4M) reports that while Trump said he is "going to pick someone who is outstanding," the "eventual nominee already faces a hurdle: Republicans hold a slim 51-49 majority in the

Senate, and Sen. John McCain is out as he battles brain cancer. That means the president needs to cater to senators on both sides of the aisle if he hopes to get a majority to vote in favor of his pick."

Reports also continue to cast the issue of abortion as likely to be a focal point of the eventual nominee's confirmation hearings. Breitbart (7/1, Key, 1.28M) says Trump "hinted at the possible overturning of Roe v. Wade" during his interview with Fox News, saying the legality of abortion "could very well end up with states at some point." Asked if abortion rights should be decided by the states, Trump said, "Well, maybe someday it will be to the states. You never know how that's going to turn out. That's a very complex question. The Roe v. Wade is probably the one that people are talking about in terms of having an effect. But we will see what happens. But it could very well end up with states at some point."

TIME (7/1, Langone, 19.27M) reports that in the interview with Fox News, "Trump acknowledged that the status of Roe v. Wade is one of the key issues in the public's mind," but Newsweek (7/1, Fearnow, 2.18M) says he "hesitantly added, however, that he's not going to be 'so specific with the questions' used to query" candidates. Yahoo! News (7/1, Walsh, 12.44M) reports Trump, however, told Fox News, "They're all saying, 'Don't do that. You don't do that. You shouldn't do that.' But I'm putting conservative people on and I'm very proud of Neil Gorsuch. He's been outstanding. His opinions are you know so well written, so brilliant. And I'm going to try and do something like that but I don't think I'm going to be so specific in the questions I'll be asking. And I'm actually told I shouldn't be."

NJ News (7/1, Salant, 1.17M), however, notes that Trump "has pledged to nominate justices who will overturn Roe v. Wade," and "said he

would choose from a list of people vetted by the Federalist Society, a conservative legal group that opposes abortion. So he already knows how anyone on the list will vote on abortion, meaning he doesn't have to ask their views on the issue."

The Washington Free Beacon (7/1, Kugle, 67K) notes that "all four names Leo mentioned are on Trump's list of potential Supreme Court justices," but when asked if they are the front runners, Leo said, "No, I don't think it's fair to say that, and here's why. The president is really in the driver's seat along with the assistance of White House counsel Don McGahn. Those are people who are under very serious consideration."

Sen. Richard Blumenthal said on CBS' Face the Nation 📺 Video (7/1, Brennan, 3.28M), "The President has said that he will appoint someone only if he or she would 'automatically overturn Roe v. Wade.'" He added, "This decision will shape the Court for years to come and it could lead to criminalizing reproductive rights, as they were prior to Roe v. Wade when women were prosecuted and women died."

The AP (6/30, Harrisburg (PA), Patriot-News), meanwhile, reports that "some evangelical leaders are downplaying their fortune on an issue that has defined their movement for decades." Jerry Falwell Jr. told the AP, "What people don't understand is that if you overturn Roe v. Wade, all that does is give the states the right to decide whether abortion is legal or illegal. My guess is that there'd probably be less than 20 states that would make abortion illegal if given that right."

Sources: White House Officials Eyeing Exits Likely To Stay Through

Confirmation.


ABC News (7/1, Palmeri, 1.85M) reports on its website that “top White House officials worn out from the chaos of the Trump administration and eyeing the exits in the coming weeks are now considering staying on through the confirmation of a Supreme Court justice, three White House officials and two outside advisors” say. White House Counsel Don McGahn, Legislative Affairs Director Marc Short and Domestic Policy Director Andrew Bremberg “have told colleagues in the days following Supreme Court Justice Kennedy’s retirement announcement that they plan to stay on staff through the confirmation process.”


Cantwell: Wrong Vote On Nominee Could Be “Career-Ending Move.”

The Washington Times (7/1, Richardson, 460K) reports Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) “warned her colleagues Sunday that a wrong decision” on President Trump’s nominee could become a “career-ending move.” Cantwell told NBC’s Meet the Press, “I think that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle know that this vote could be one of the key votes of their entire career. And they know that no matter what spin comes out of the White House, if they vote for somebody who’s going to change precedent, it could be a career-ending move.” The Hill (7/1, Birnbaum, 2.71M) also reports Cantwell’s comments.


A Washington Times (7/1, McLaughlin, 460K) analysis, meanwhile, says “red-state Democrats seeking re-election this fall were already facing the difficult task of navigating between their own virulently anti-Trump national party and the Republican-leaning voters needed to win back home. But that narrow path has become even more of a tightrope now that incumbents will be asked to take sides” on the President’s nomination. The Times says if Republicans “hold firm, the Senate is likely to vote on a Supreme Court nominee just as the midterm

campaign season hits full stride." But it "also means vulnerable Democrats in states such as West Virginia and North Dakota will have to choose between a president who easily won their states in 2016 and a frenzied liberal base intent on blocking anyone he chooses."

Seung Min Kim of the Washington Post said on [CNN Inside Politics](#)  [Video](#) (7/1, 733K), "For Senate Democrats, this is their one chance to really get their base to care about the Court. What we've seen last several years, perhaps the last decade is that conservatives are better at the court issue than Democrats in terms of just getting the base involved, getting their base excited," but "now with potentially the future of Roe v. Wade on the line, Democrats, this is their chance to really get their voters excited and that's why you're seeing the Democratic messaging on the Supreme Court already focusing on not only abortion, but future of the Affordable Care Act."

Michael Shear of the New York Times said on [CNN Inside Politics](#)  [Video](#) (7/1, 733K), "I think one of the things you're going to see is that the Democrats are going to try to make the case that to their base" that abortion and the Affordable Care Act are "something that you have to be united on...because what the Democrats need is to hold their entire - all 49 and then they only have to peel off one Republican."

Toomey: Special Counsel Investigation Should Not Prevent Trump Nomination.


Sen. Pat Toomey (R-PA), asked on [CBS' Face the Nation](#)  [Video](#) (7/1, Brennan, 3.28M) about the question of the Special Counsel investigation and the probability of the justice Trump appoints ruling in the case, said, "I think that is a ridiculous argument that is made as just an

attempt to make way for the real position, which is that President Trump should never be able to confirm a vacancy.” He added, “I don’t remember hearing the Democrats making that argument when President Bill Clinton was in fact personally under investigation when a vacancy occurred. My understanding is that President Trump is not himself personally the subject of the investigation even. I think that is a non-argument.”

Trump Retweets Elder Joke About Reporter Fired Over False MAGA Hat Claim.


The New York Post (7/1, Perez, 4.46M) reports that President Trump on Sunday retweeted “a tweet by conservative radio host Larry Elder...which poked fun at a newspaper reporter who lost his job after he falsely claimed that the Capital Gazette shooter wore a ‘Make America Great Again’ hat during the massacre.” Elder sent the tweet, which read, “BEWARE! #TrumpDerangementSyndrome can be career ending,” in response “to an article published by The Hill, which covered the resignation of Conor Berry, a former reporter at The Republican in Springfield, Mass.”


Hemingway: Press Sought To Tie Trump To Maryland Newspaper Shooting.

Mollie Hemingway of The Federalist said on Fox News MediaBuzz  Video (7/1, 1.61M), “It’s very difficult when something like this happens. You are desperate for information and speculation runs

rampant. I think it's important for journalists to make sure they are not speculating without evidence. It wasn't just bad that people started trying to tie President Trump to the shooting. It was that after the news came out showing that the shooter had a longstanding grudge against the publication dating back to 2011, many journalists kept saying that they thought this was somehow the responsibility of President Trump."


Waters: People Want Democrats To Be "More Confrontational" Against Trump.

Breitbart (7/1, Key, 1.28M) reports that Rep. Maxine Waters told MSNBC AM Joy  Video Sunday that weekend protests over the President's immigration policies show that "the people" want Democrats to be "more forceful" and "more confrontational" in their opposition. Waters said, "Well, let me just tell you this, first of all, the people of this country, no matter Republican or Democrat, do not like the idea that children have been separated. Republicans are making a mistake thinking they can hold on to that constituency, that so-called belongs to Donald Trump. On this issue, Republicans and Democrats, Independents alike are opposed to what is going on. And yes, people do want to see us being stronger and more forceful and to confront them on these policies."

Fox News (7/1, Chamberlain, 16.38M) reports on its website that Waters said she was "surprised" by criticism from Democratic leaders over her call for people to "push back" against members of the Administration. Waters said  Video, "One of the things I recognize, being an elected official, is in the final analysis, leadership ... will do

anything that they think is necessary to protect their leadership and so what I have to do is not focus on them." Waters added, "I was blessed with courage. And I was blessed with the kind of strength that does not allow me to be intimidated by the likes of Donald Trump. ... Let him call me whatever he wants to call me. Let him say whatever he wants to say. He will not stop me." The Hill (7/1, Wise, 2.71M) also reports on Waters' comments.

Todd: Trump Is "Winning," Democrats Are "Reeling."

Breitbart (7/1, Key, 1.28M) reports that Chuck Todd, host of NBC's Meet the Press  Video, said Sunday that President Trump is "winning" and Democrats are "reeling." Todd said, "The announced retirement of Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy this week helped make one political reality clear: Despite his overall unpopularity, President Trump is winning, and the Democrats right now are reeling. ... How about the Republican Party? The president's approval rating among Republicans is around 90 percent. Elected Republicans fear criticizing him, and the party has become a cult of personality: his." Todd continued, "Still, much of Mr. Trump's success is superficial. While he's more popular among Republicans, the party overall is shrinking. His trade war, North Korea, or the Mueller investigation all could turn against him and, frankly, turn against him now like North Korea has. But if the Democrats' reaction to the Kennedy retirement proved anything, it's that the Democratic Party has not figured out how to succeed in the Trump era."

Ocasio-Cortez: Democratic Socialism Just “Part Of What I Am.”

The Washington Times (7/1, Richardson, 460K) reports that in an interview with NBC's Meet the Press 📺 Video Sunday, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who defeated Rep. Joe Crowley in last week's primary in NY14, “downplayed...her affiliation with democratic socialism,” saying, “It’s part of what I am. It’s not all of what I am. And I think that that’s a very important distinction. ... I’m an educator, I’m an organizer. ... And I believe that what we’re really seeing is just a movement for health care housing and education in the United States.” Ocasio-Cortez added, “Democrats are a big tent party. ... I’m not trying to impose an ideology on all several hundred members of Congress, but I do think that once again it’s not selling an -ism or an ideology or a label or a color. It’s about selling our values.”

The New York Post (7/1, Moore, 4.46M) reports that Ocasio-Cortez “faulted Crowley, a 10-term incumbent, for not being more closely connected to the community,” saying, “I do think there was certainly a lack of presence, and that was a big part of my win. ... There was a lack of listening on the ground. A lack of going to the grocery store and saying ‘Hey, how you doing?’ That is an important work of representation.” Ocasio-Cortez also “said the Democrats must have a unified message that people can rally around, especially in the fight over President Trump’s nominee to the Supreme Court.” She said, “This Supreme Court seat is extremely serious. There is a federal investigation going on with direct implications to the presidency and that presidency is talking about nominating a Supreme Court pick that is going to essentially hear this case out.”


Duckworth: Democrats Can't Go Too Far Left An Win Nationwide.

The Washington Examiner (7/1, Ayers, 340K) reports that Sen. Tammy Duckworth warned Sunday that the Democratic Party should not move further to the left if they want to win the presidency. Following the surprising defeat of Crowley by Ocasio-Cortez, an "avowed Democratic socialist," Duckworth told CNN's State of the Union 📺 Video Sunday that "she doesn't foresee that being a winning strategy in the Midwest." Said Duckworth, "I think that you can't win the White House without the Midwest. ... And I don't think you can go too far to the left and still win the Midwest — coming from a Midwestern state." Duckworth urged dialogue with the "industrial Midwest," and said, "You need to listen to the people there in order to win an election nationwide."

The Washington Post (7/1, Scherer, 15.68M) says Democratic leaders are "scrambling to keep the political outrage they'd counted on to fuel midterm election wins from becoming a liability for the party." Internal debates "have broken into public view over maintaining civility and the usefulness of liberal slogans like 'abolish ICE,' which some Republicans have embraced to argue falsely that Democrats oppose immigration enforcement." Meanwhile, "liberal activists have begun to argue for more radical measures to counter the president, who they assert presents an immediate threat to the republic."


Rachel Bade of Politico said on CNN Inside Politics 📺 Video (7/1, 733K) that Ocasio-Cortez's primary win over Crowley "was a clear message to the top of Democratic leadership in the House that Democrats want change in their hierarchy and they want the establishment out, they

want new blood at the top and they are ready to see somebody else lead beyond Pelosi.”

John King said on [CNN Inside Politics](#)  [Video](#) (7/1, 733K), “If there’s a giant blue wave and Democrats win the House by 20 seats, Nancy Pelosi will be okay. She still is the party’s premier fundraiser. She still has a lot of loyalty in the caucus. However, if they just squeak by and a whole bunch of candidates promised in their TV ads I won’t vote for her, she’s going to have to negotiate either a temporary speakership...or she may have to go.”

Portland Police Declare Riot, Revoke Permit As Antifa Disrupts Protest.

[Breitbart](#) (7/1, Huston, 1.28M) reports that Portland, Oregon police “revoked a permit for a pro-America march and declared the scene a riot when counter-protesters erupted in violence on Saturday.” The permit had been “secured by the Patriot Prayer group that had planned a march entitled the ‘Freedom and Courage’ rally. But a large number of members of a local violent, black-clad Antifa group also gathered along the march route and began a series of confrontations with the marchers.” According to The Oregonian, the Antifa group “initiated hostilities by throwing eggs, bottles, and other items at the Patriot group, the paper noted.”


[ABC World News Tonight](#)  [Video](#) (7/1, story 9, 0:20, Llamas, 14.63M)

reported that according to police, at least four people were hurt “when right-wing demonstrators and counter-protesters broke out in brawls,” and “at least nine people [are] facing charges.” The [CBS Weekend News Video](#) (7/1, story 9, 0:20, Quijano, 5.32M) reported that officials “say they seized knives, clubs, and chemical sprays.”

NYTimes Analysis: Supreme Court Ruling Against Unions A Blow To Liberal Groups.

The [New York Times](#) (7/1, Scheiber, 19.33M) reports that the Supreme Court’s ruling “striking down mandatory union fees for government workers” will “hit hard at a vast network of groups dedicated to advancing liberal policies and candidates.” Groups that “work for immigrants and civil rights,” or “produce economic research” or “turn out voters or run ads in Democratic campaigns,” have “benefited from tens of millions of dollars a year from public-sector unions — funding now in jeopardy because of the prospective decline in union revenue.” According to liberal activists, cutting off that funding “was a crucial goal of the conservative groups that helped bring the case, known as *Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees*,” and conservatives “have acknowledged as much. ... Even President Trump took notice of the justices’ ruling, declaring on Twitter that it was a ‘big loss for the coffers of the Democrats!’”


Trump Says He Wants To Stay “Uninvolved” In Russia Probe, “At Least For Now.”

President Trump was asked in an interview that aired on [Fox News Sunday Morning Futures](#)  [Video](#) (7/1, Bartiromo, 1.79M) about Russia investigation. Trump said, “So, I have this country running like a top, Mike Pompeo is doing great.” He said, “We have a great group of people” and “the one thing I want to stay uninvolved in at least for now I may get involved but I have been told by so many people don’t get involved.” He said, “There’s no collusion with me ...honestly it is a disgrace but I purposely said I’m not getting involved” and “you know, they found nothing.” He said, “By the way, this is the most transparent thing ever done with the White House... I think I gave them a million 400,000 documents I told them don’t even read them; there’s no Russia mentioned or anything like that.”

Judge Rules Rosenstein’s Order Gives Mueller Wide Investigative Latitude.

The [Washington Times](#) (7/1, Scarborough, 460K) reports that understanding the reason special counsel Robert Mueller has expanded his investigation beyond the 2016 presidential race “may require perusing a federal judge’s opinion on June 26 in the Paul Manafort case.” District Court Judge T.S. Ellis III “dissected Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein’s May 2017 appointment order to Mr. Mueller,” and “concluded that the prosecutor is empowered to look at virtually any Russian contact.” According to Ellis, Rosenstein’s guidelines “state that Mr. Mueller is to investigate any links between the Russian government and Trump campaign associates,” which means “indirect links” or “potential links,” giving Mueller “wide latitude when deciding whether to target a Trump person.”

Judge Extends Program Paying For Hurricane Maria Victims' Hotel Stays.


The [CBS Weekend News](#)  Video (7/1, story 11, 0:30, Quijano, 5.32M) reported that Hurricane Maria evacuees living in hotels have gotten a "short reprieve" as a federal judge "temporarily extended the program that's been paying for their stay." The program was "set to expire at midnight Sunday, but will now end on Tuesday."

Private Equity Group Offer High-Interest Loans To Cash-Strapped Americans.

The [Washington Post](#) (7/1, Whoriskey, 15.68M) reports that the company Mariner Finance "enables some of the nation's wealthiest investors and investment funds to make money offering high-interest loans to cash-strapped Americans." The company "is owned and managed by a \$11.2 billion private equity fund controlled by Warburg Pincus, a storied New York firm," whose president is Timothy F. Geithner, "who, as treasury secretary in the Obama administration, condemned predatory lenders." The Post says the market for "consumer installment loans," which Mariner and its competitors serve, has grown rapidly in recent years, particularly as new federal regulations have curtailed payday lending, according to the Center for

Financial Services Innovation, a nonprofit research group. Private equity firms, with billions to invest, have taken significant stakes in the growing field.” Mariner “stands out for the frequent use of mass-mailed checks, which allows customers to accept a high-interest loan on an impulse — just sign the check.”

Median Prime For A Single-Family Home In San Francisco Bay Area Is \$935,000.


The [CBS Weekend News](#)  Video (7/1, story 8, 2:10, Quijano, 5.32M) reported that “a recent report says the median price for a single-family home in the [San Francisco] Bay area is \$935,000. In the city it’s even higher.” CBS (Strassmann) added that market “is fueled by thousands of well-paid tech workers who have driven up the median price of a San Francisco home to \$1.6 million, the highest in the country. And while housing prices are rising faster than incomes nationwide, nowhere is it more evident than in the Bay area, where home values have soared a staggering 64% over the last five years.”

High Schools Clamp Down On Student Journalists Covering Sensitive Subjects.

The [New York Times](#) (7/1, Peiser, 19.33M) reports that high schools

across the nation have been pushing back against student journalists "who have reported on sensitive subjects, like the reaction to school shootings and adolescent sexuality." Since a 1988 Supreme Court ruling "that a Missouri school district had acted lawfully in removing a two-page spread on divorce and teenage pregnancy from a student newspaper, administrators have been able to censor work in school publications that they consider poorly written or 'inconsistent with the shared values of a civilized social order.'" The Times cites a number of examples but also notes that in some places, "student reporters have delved into difficult subjects without interference or complaint from administrators."

Seattle Bans Plastic Straws, Utensils In Restaurants.

NBC Nightly News  Video (7/1, story 8, 2:30, Jackson, 8.26M) reported that Seattle on Sunday joined "the growing list of cities banning plastic straws and plastic forks and knives in local restaurants. They're almost never recycled, meaning they end up in landfills, creating more of a pollution problem." NBC (Fryer) added that "28 cities around the country that have banned or limited plastic straws or are considering it. California and Hawaii are even exploring statewide policies."

Murdoch Turning Much Of The Company He Built Over To Disney.

The Washington Post (7/1, Ellison, 15.68M) reports that 21st Century Fox and News Corp. founder and co-executive chairman Rupert Murdoch is "selling the bulk of the company to Disney." It is "a seminal moment for Murdoch, who is turning over the power to run the company he has spent his career building." The Post adds that with President Trump's election, Murdoch is "at the height of his political influence in the United States, a position he has long sought. Murdoch has a direct line to Trump and close relationships with several Fox News personalities who act as unofficial advisers to the White House." Murdoch and the President "talk weekly and sometimes daily, according to people close to both men." Moreover, with "former Fox News executive and Sean Hannity confidant Bill Shine...expected to take the job of White House deputy chief of staff in charge of communications," it "only adds to the personal connections between Trump and the Murdoch-controlled news network."

In an editorial, the New York Times (7/1, 19.33M) questions the speed with which the Justice Department approved the Disney-Fox deal, saying it took "about half the time that regulators usually need to evaluate deals of this size." Noting that the Department "spent nearly two years investigating AT&T's acquisition of Time Warner and bringing an ultimately unsuccessful lawsuit against the deal," the Times says that while the Administration "has denied that politics plays a role in its antitrust enforcement decisions," it is "hard not to be skeptical of the possible motivations behind the Justice Department's approach to these deals."

Professors Oppose Stricter Work Requirements For SNAP.

In an op-ed for the New York Times (7/1, 19.33M), Sarah Bowen, Sinikka Elliott And Annie Hardison-Moody, professors who have conducted a study on child hunger, write that the nation's policies "have long reflected, imperfectly, the moral imperative that children deserve adequate food. Until now." Although SNAP already includes work requirements for able-bodied adults without children, the House-passed farm bill "an even harsher policy and extends it to parents of school-age children. It would require that most adults provide monthly proof that they are working or enrolled in at least 20 hours of work force training per week in order to receive support" or risk being locked out of the program for three years. They note that the Senate version does not include the requirement "that will leave more kids hungry," and argue that while President Trump "offered his support," for stricter work requirements, the program "should not be restricted" but "expanded, so that fewer families — and especially kids — are hungry."

WPost Welcomes Transfer Of Background Checks From OPM To DOD.

In an editorial, the Washington Post (7/1, 15.68M) says the Administration's proposal to transfer responsibility for background investigations for security clearances from the OPM to the Defense Department is change that is "a long time coming." The Post cites criticism of OPM's "slow processing of background checks" as well as "security concerns" stemming from the agency's handling of the investigations and says the "transfer of security-clearance

responsibilities makes sense.” However, the Post says Defense Department must “address these concerns and ensure that the background-check process is efficient, secure and accurate going forward.”

WSJournal Criticizes Individual, Corporate Tax Hikes In New Jersey.

A Wall Street Journal (7/1, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) editorial criticizes New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy and State Senate leader Steve Sweeney for agreeing to increase New Jersey’s state’s income tax on residents making more than \$5 million and the corporate rate on companies with more than \$1 million in income, giving the state the fourth highest income tax rate on individuals and the second highest corporate rate in the nation.

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"Your Credit Card Will Pay For The Next Recession." The New York Times (7/1, 19.33M) says in an editorial that Federal Reserve forecasters' "median prediction is that the federal funds rate is headed to 3.4 percent by the end of 2020 from the current 1.9 percent," meaning consumers will be "paying more to get a mortgage, a new-car loan or to carry a balance on your credit card. How much more? Possibly enough to absorb whatever extra income you might be enjoying from lower tax rates or higher wages." The Fed's job of keeping "inflation in check by raising rates," has been "made more urgent by the Republicans' \$1.5 trillion tax giveaway to the wealthy and corporations." Now, "Trump supporters who benefited the least from the Republican tax cut...will now have to pay the bulk of the bill to mitigate the damage it caused to the economy."

"The Disney-Fox Deal Sails Through, A Bit Too Easily."

In an editorial, the New York Times (7/1, 19.33M) questions the speed with which the Justice Department approved the Disney-Fox deal, saying it took "about half the time that regulators usually need to evaluate deals of this size." Noting that the Department "spent nearly two years investigating AT&T's acquisition of Time Warner and bringing an ultimately unsuccessful lawsuit against the deal," the Times says that while the Administration "has denied that politics plays a role in its antitrust enforcement decisions," it is "hard not to be skeptical of the possible motivations behind the Justice Department's approach to these deals."

Washington Post.

"This Piece Of Trump's Federal Shake-Up Has Been A Long Time Coming. Get It Right." In an editorial, the Washington Post (7/1, 15.68M) says the Administration's proposal to transfer responsibility for background investigations for security clearances from the OPM to the Defense Department is change that is "a long time coming." The Post cites criticism of OPM's "slow processing of background checks" as well as "security concerns" stemming from the agency's handling of the investigations and says the "transfer of security-clearance responsibilities makes sense." However, the Post says Defense Department must "address these concerns and ensure that the background-check process is efficient, secure and accurate going forward."

"The Malaria Fight Stalls As Children Die By The Hundreds Of Thousands."

A Washington Post (7/1, 15.68M) editorial says that while the number of malaria cases and deaths have declined steadily for a decade and a half as "global public-health officials have been at war" with the disease, the "battle shows signs of stalling." In 2016, "the number of malaria cases went up to 215 million, from 210 million the year before." The Post says that the fight against malaria will be won "by action on many fronts. A stall, after so much promise, would be terrible and costly."

"What Are The Park Police Hiding?"

A Washington Post (7/1, 15.68M) criticizes the "epic stonewalling campaign" by US Park Police concerning Park Police officers' fatal shooting of Bijan Ghaisar, "a young accountant in Northern Virginia who appeared to pose no threat to them or anyone else." The Post says "it has been 225 days – and counting" and the Park Police response "has been characterized by brazen arrogance and in-your-face unaccountability on a grand scale." The Post concludes that "after so many months of official nonresponsiveness, there is one overarching question the public is entitled to ask: What are the police trying to hide?"

Wall Street Journal.

"The War On Admissions Testing." In an editorial, the Wall Street Journal (7/1, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) takes issue with a growing movement to eliminate the ACT and SAT tests for college admissions. The Journal argues that although no test is ideal, the ACT and SAT are good predictors of how a student will perform in college.

"New Jersey's Tax Gift To Florida."

A Wall Street Journal (7/1, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) editorial criticizes New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy and State Senate leader Steve Sweeney for agreeing to increase New Jersey's state's income tax on residents making more than \$5 million and the corporate rate on

companies with more than \$1 million in income, giving the state the fourth highest income tax rate on individuals and the second highest corporate rate in the nation.

“North Korea Keeps Enriching Uranium.”

A Wall Street Journal (7/1, Subscription Publication, 6.13M) editorial says evidence of North Korea’s continuing nuclear-fuel production suggests Pyongyang intends to drag out open-ended talks with the US for as long as possible in hopes of extracting new concessions along the way. The Journal says if President Trump does not call Kim Jong-un out on these activities, then Kim will conclude that he can get away with this behavior.

The Big Picture

Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

Trump Cites Threat Of Auto Tariffs As His Biggest Leverage

Facebook Gave Firms Special Access To Users' Personal Data

North Korea Expands Key Missile-Manufacturing Plant

Taiwan's Technology Secrets Come Under Assault From China

New York Times:

Supreme Court Defeat For Unions Upends A Liberal Money Base

Bulwark Against An Abortion Ban? Medical Advances

In Denmark, Harsh New Laws For Immigrant 'Ghettos'

Leftist Wins Mexico Presidency In Landslide With Mandate To Reshape Nation

As Bolton Says North Korea Could Disarm In A Year, Reality Lags

Promises

Behind Lincoln Center's White Travertine Facade: Infighting And Indecision

Washington Post:

Unsolicited Checks Can Be A Lifeline — And An Albatross

Trump Stays Firm On Trade As Foreign Tariffs Kick In

Democrats' Bad Week Highlights A Big Rift

Two Bristols, Two Fiscal Realities

Mexico Turns Left In Election

Emails Reveal Ties Between Top EPA Aides And Lobbyists

Financial Times:

Amlo Seals Comfortable Victory In Mexico Election

[EU Warns Of \\$300BN Hit To US Over Car Import Tariffs](#)

[Alphabet Adds To Transport Bets With Scooter Deal](#)

[Activist Loeb Demands More Urgency At 'Complacent' Nestlé](#)

Washington Times:

[Swing-Vote Collins Keeps Open Mind On Trump's Supreme Court Pick Despite Leftist Pressure](#)

[Political Pickle: Supreme Court Vacancy Puts Red-State Democrats In A Big Campaign Quandary](#)

[Trump's 'Down The Road' Deadline To Lift North Korea Sanctions Frustrates Nations Eager For Trade](#)

[Trump's Pressure Against Regime Adds Strength To Iran's Largest Dissident Group](#)

[Judge: Rosenstein's 'Any Links' Mandate Empowers Mueller To Look At Virtually Any Russian Contact](#)

[After Trump Yields On Family Separation, Immigration Activists Demand End To Detentions, ICE](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Severe Weather; Bahamas-Boat Explosion; Idaho-Man Goes On Stabbing Spree; Trump-SCOTUS Pick; France-Murderer Escapes Prison; Mexico-Elections; India-Bus Accident; Oregon-Police Shooting; Australia-Shark Bites Woman; Portland-Protest Becomes Riot; China-Road Collapses; Reagan National Airport-United Express Flight Forced To Deplane; Food Recall-Wishbone Italian Dressing; Best Buy Stops Selling CDs; Police Lip Sync.

CBS: Severe Weather; Wildfires; Bahamas-Boat Explosion; Trump-SCOTUS Pick; Reagan National Airport-United Express Flight Forced To Deplane; Maryland-Capital Gazette Memorial; US-Russia Relations; Mexico-Elections; San Francisco-Housing Market; Portland-Protest Becomes Riot; Thailand-Missing Boys' Soccer Team; Puerto Rico-Hurricane Maria Evacuees; Long Island-Father Son Sock Business.

NBC: Idaho-Man Goes On Stabbing Spree; Severe Weather; Weather Report; Wildfires; Bahamas-Boat Explosion; Trump-SCOTUS Pick; Mexico-Elections; Plastic Straw Bans; Opioid Crisis-France's Solution; France-Murderer Escapes Prison; Family's Monster Truck Business.

Network TV At A Glance:

Severe Weather – 7 minutes, 35 seconds

Trump-SCOTUS Pick – 7 minutes, 30 seconds

Bahamas-Boat Explosion – 4 minutes, 50 seconds

Mexico-Elections – 3 minutes, 0 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Trump-SCOTUS Pick; Idaho-Man Goes On Stabbing Spree; NBA News.

CBS: Idaho-Man Goes On Stabbing Spree; Severe Weather; Wildfires; Mexico-Elections; NBA News.

FOX: NBA News; Congress-SCOTUS Pick; Mexico-Elections.

NPR: Trump-SCOTUS Pick; Idaho-Man Goes On Stabbing Spree; Guatemala-Volcano-Health Issues; Canada-Tariffs On US.

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

John Oliver:

Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy's retirement "is obviously huge news, and for anyone who believes that the Constitution protects things like reproductive and LGBT rights, this is bad. And we know it's bad because Donald Trump Jr. was happy, tweeting 'OMG just when you thought this week couldn't get more lit, I give you Anthony Kennedy's retirement from #scotus.' And I'm afraid I'm going to have to disagree with Mr. Junior on this, because I personally don't think this was lit at all. I mean, it's obvs cray af. No one is denying that, fam. But I would argue that this news was neither lit nor on fleek. Nor was it three fire emojis. Now, granted, I am still a little shook, jsyk, but I personally believe Kennedy's retirement is super werpt. And I'm happy to announce that, in saying that, all the slang words I just used are now officially dead forever. And that includes 'werpt,' a term that doesn't even exist, but which I have preemptively ruined just in case."

John Oliver:

"The big question here is, who is going to replace Kennedy? And the Administration has made their plans pretty clear, with Mike Pence tweeting, 'Thank you to justice Anthony Kennedy for your long career of service. Trump will nominate a strong conservative in the tradition of the late Justice Scalia.' Which is a little weird. You don't generally stand up at someone's retirement party and say, 'Thank you for everything you did for this company, Robert, and rest assured that we will replace you with someone exactly like that other guy who used to work here that we always liked much more than you.'"

John Oliver:

"There's a fundamental problem there, and that is that Republicans have 51 seats in the Senate, and they need 51 votes to confirm the new justice. So unless Democrats can convince their entire party to oppose the nomination and persuade a number of Republicans over to their side, they are...out of luck, meaning it's time for Democrats' favorite game: 'Hope Susan Collin Flips And Be Disappointed When She Doesn't!' It's America's most depressing game show."

John Oliver:

"I'm happy to say, there is some good news. It turns out there's a

constitutional loophole that allows Democrats to – I’m obviously lying here. There’s no good news. Everything is terrible now.”

John Oliver:

“Barring some massive screw-up from Trump, the only thing anyone can really do is vote. And there are actually two key elections you should really try and vote in: One in 2016 and one in 2014. Because that is what got us into this mess.”

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HHS NEWS BRIEFING

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